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THE

INVASION OF THE CRIMEA.

WINTER TROUBLES

EXPLANATION

The changes of position that took place after the beginning of the winter were caused :—

The Russians withdrew from Tchorgoun and generally from the Plain of Balaclava ; but late in the winter they so far became aggressive as to encroach upon ground previously held by the Allies, and strengthen their acquisition by earthworks. They erected and—for weeks—held the 'Mamelon,' a ravine in advance of their Malakoff Battery, and they threw up redoubts (for in advance of their Annibal defences) on the north-west angle of Mount Inkerman.

As regards the French and the English, this important change took place :—

At the time indicated in the text, General Canrobert relieved the overtasked troops of the English from a wasteful part of their duties, by taking up the ground they had occupied both on Mount Inkerman and on the Victoria Ridge.

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THE changes of position that took place after the beginning of the winter were several:—

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As regards the French and the English, this important change took place:—

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THE

INVASION OF THE CRIMEA

ITS ORIGIN,

AND

AN ACCOUNT OF ITS PROGRESS

DOWN TO THE DEATH OF

LORD RAGLAN.

BY A. W. KINGLAKE.

29906 ac

VOLUME VI.

THE WINTER TROUBLES.

WILLIAM BLACKWOOD AND SONS,
EDINBURGH AND LONDON.
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1880

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THE WINTER TROUBLES.

CHAPTER I.

DETERMINATION OF THE ALLIES TO WINTER ON THE CHERSONESE HEIGHTS.—THE IMPORT OF THIS RESOLVE AS REGARDED THE HEALTH AND STRENGTH OF THEIR ARMIES.

CHAP. I.

The hope cherished by Canrobert;

WHEN the meditated assault of Sebastopol was deferred yet again after 'Inkerman,' General Canrobert seemed to cherish a hope that the landing of his expected reinforcements would enable him once more to go on with his thrice-interrupted design;* but Lord Raglan, I suppose, apprehended that the accession of fresh troops from France might be followed by a new crop of reasons to warrant yet further delay; for, if harbouring still any vestige of former illusions, he at least did not suffer their witchery to lull his care for the morrow.

The illusion scarce shared by Lord Raglan.

* This impression, I think, is warranted by General Canrobert's curious note—the one recommending an 'atermoiement'—given in the 'Invasion of the Crimea,' vol. v., Appendix, No. XV. See also in reference to my use of the above word 'his,' the Appendix to this volume, No. I.

CHAP. I.

And, the morrow he confronted in thought was other than one of the kind that awaits an army when destined to find repose in some town after carrying its defences by storm. The winter—this was his morrow—the winter awaiting his army, and awaiting it on the Chersonese Heights.

So early as the 8th of August—long before the invasion began—he had impressively represented to our Home Government that the question where the Allied armies should winter was one 'of some 'anxiety;' saying also, 'I am aware that, if the 'great operation be undertaken, and be successful 'to the utmost extent, there would be room for 'the two armies in the Crimea; but under other 'circumstances, it will be very difficult to find the 'means of putting them under cover.' And long afterwards, when the conditions proved such, that, instead of sharing between them the whole Crimea, the two Allied armies were in danger of having to winter upon the barren patch of ground where they stood, he prepared both himself and his Government for the threatened contingency;* but what he before had only deemed probable he now frankly treated as certain. On the 8th of November, he instructed his Commissary-General that our army would winter in the Crimea, and directed him to 'make provision 'accordingly.' †

His final orders to make provision for wintering in the Crimea.

Danger of a winter on the

The more purely strategical import of a determination which condemned the invaders to winter on the

* 'Invasion of the Crimea,' vol. iii., 3d edition, p. 491 *et seq.*

† Statement made by Mr Filder to the Chelsea Board, p. 358.

Chersonese, may be separately brought under question; but what here invites thought is the bearing of such a resolve upon the health and wellbeing of the Allied armies, if not upon their very existence.

Chersonese to the health of the Allied armies;

Resulting from the policy of the 'flank march,' and the more and more siege-like measures which followed, there had come upon the Allies before Inkerman a change of conditions so harsh that they who, on the day of the Alma, became potentially masters —if not of Sebastopol itself, yet certainly—of all the rest of Crimea, were now without a spot of ground left them except what lay under their feet, and had lost, too, all freedom of movement. Having voluntarily abandoned to the enemy not only his precious line of communication, but almost the whole of the Crimea; having judged that—at least for the present —Sebastopol must stop them in front; and, finally, having suffered Liprandi to close round their flank, nay, even to encroach upon their camp, and warn off our people from the Woronzoff road,—they had become completely hemmed in on the land-side.

Their straitened position;

In surrendering themselves thus to the yoke of their own chosen strategy, the Allies, amongst other things, ventured to put themselves at war with the elements; and, their armies lying camped for the most part on the bleak, open wold of the Chersonese, it was there that they now undertook to confront the approaching winter. But, moreover, for their place of duress they had chosen a pittance of ground so small and so barren that not only did it yield their soldiery no food, but even denied them what they needed of forage and

Their consequent want of power to appropriate the resources of the country.

CHAP. I.

fuel—things that rarely before had been wanting to the victorious invaders of a country in which hay and wood-stores abounded.* Enriched by that singular exchange of dominion which he owed to the two flank marches of the 25th of September,† and displaying his command of those very possessions which our people most bitterly needed, the enemy sometimes pastured his flocks—his immense flocks—of sheep under the eyes of our outlying sentries, and showed to any observers who chose to put up their field-glasses his stacks of forage piled up in ranks that seemed miles and miles long.‡ Nor did 'Inkerman'

These resources entirely at the command of the enemy.

* The dandelion weed was found, and advantageously used by the French, but rather as medicine than 'food.' Our people at one time obtained some hay in the Tchernaya valley, but the supply was scanty; and for all the forage they needed at the period now reached, the Allies were dependent upon sea-transport. As regards fuel, it may be said that the expedient of grubbing up roots with which little fires might be made could still be adopted; but the task of obtaining this supply without proper tools for the purpose added painfully to the labours of our overworked soldiery, and so early as the 12th of October, Lord Raglan had directed his Commissary-General to lay in a stock of fuel at Scutari.—Mr Filder before the Chelsea Board, p. 358 of the Report.

† During the four days immediately following the Alma, Prince Mentschikoff had a hold—a weak hold—of Sebastopol and the Chersonese, whilst of all the rest of the Crimea the Allies were virtually masters; but on the 25th of September (*see* 'Invasion of the Crimea,' vol. iii. p. 81 *et seq.*), Lord Raglan executed his flank march towards the south, whilst Prince Mentschikoff at the same time executed his flank march towards the north; and from these cross movements it resulted that, the Allies not as yet proving able to break their way into Sebastopol, the dominion of all the Crimea except only Balaclava and the Chersonese promontory passed back into the hands of the Russians. That which made this exchange of dominion prove—at least for the time—irreversible, was the difficulty of carrying either Sebastopol or the Mackenzie Heights by any attacks from the south.

‡ After landing in the Crimea, Assistant Commissary-General Rogers wrote thus on the 17th September to Sir Charles Trevelyan: 'It ap-

alter this contrast between abundance and want; for when once the Allies had determined that the battle, though ending in victory, furnished nevertheless a good ground for deferring their intended attack, and remaining, as before, in close duress, it followed—however anomalously — that the products of the country would still be withheld from the victors, and still accrue to the vanquished.

The Allied armies wholly dependent upon supplies brought by sea;

When they thus yielded up to their adversary the resources of the invaded country, the Allied armies threw themselves wholly upon aid brought from over the sea; and more absolutely than ever before their welfare became committed to distant Ministers of State, and numberless officers and public servants of lesser degree, to merchants, contractors, shipowners, ship-captains, and sailors, to artificers of various callings, and workmen of various races. A default, though in only one part of all this living machinery, might cruelly, might fatally aggravate the hardships of a soldiery condemned to be camping throughout a Crim-Tartary winter on bleak, open, storm-swept downs; and it seems right to look at not merely the actual physical means, but also the two systems of administration on which, in such a predicament, France and England would have to rely, when labouring as best they might to keep their armies alive.

and consequently upon the exertions of others.

'pears a fine country for the commissariat, abounding with herds of 'cattle, and tracts of corn and hay ready cut for use;' and that first impression did not prove deceptive.

CHAPTER II.

THE WAR ADMINISTRATION OF FRANCE.

CHAP. II.

The French system of war administration.

FRANCE—in that respect differing from England—had a real War Department—a Department singly charged with the task of preparing and maintaining war. Whether constructing fortresses, or forging arms, or accumulating military stores; whether raising or equipping or training horse, foot, or artillery; whether feeding or sheltering the men or the horses, or watching over their health; whether organising or commanding the forces thus created, or giving them, with prepared means of transport, the power to move as an army; whether sending them by land or by sea, with all their thousand needs and appliances, or bringing them at length into the field, and there still supplying their wants, —it was always through the instrumentality of this one great Department that France maintained present war or made ready for wars yet to come.

At times when peace reigned in Europe, the Department, so far as was practicable, had been wisely accustomed to conduct its multifarious business by methods that would hold good in war; so that, if it

should be suddenly called upon to take measures against an enemy no longer imaginary but real, there need not on that account follow any mischievous dislocation or change of governmental machinery; and—with only some moderate increase of official activity, or, perhaps, by degrees, some expansion of a few sub-departments — the appliances of an existing routine might be made to bear the new strain. Indeed, the exigencies that arose when France declared against Russia, were hardly so new in kind as to demand new kinds of exertion; for she did not really pass into war from a state of absolute peace. Long accustomed to the practice of maintaining great armies, she had also been devoting her energies for the last twenty-four years to the task of either conquering or maintaining dominions in the north of Africa; and, although it perhaps may be true that the habit of contending with Kabyles and Barbary Arabs did not constitute a good preparation for the hour of battle in Europe, it is certain that the conduct of administrative war-business in Algeria was a schooling very useful to men who might afterwards have to feed war in other parts of the world, but especially so, if their task should be such as the one now in hand where an army despatched by sea to a distant shore must be there maintained in strength by measures deriving from Paris. If a French soldier reached the Crimea, if he found there bread, coffee, and cartridges; if, when wounded or sick, he was carried in the invalid's pannier, or the ready ambulance-cart to be laid on a good bed in hospital, and brought under medical care, he

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throughout owed his fate to the same sort of measures as those which for years had been bringing French regiments to Africa, which for years, too, had there been maintaining them in spite of many adverse conditions; and perhaps one may say almost generally that, although the demands of this campaign in the East gave, of course, a new scope and direction to the energy of the French War Department, they engaged it for the most part in tasks which long practice had rendered familiar.

The French War Department was, of course, a Department of State; but, its chief being always a general, if not indeed a marshal of France, the spirit in which other generals received his orders was scarce other than that of battalions obeying the word of command; and reciprocally, there was a military element in the sense of duty, and the wholesome ambition which impelled him to do all he could towards becoming, like Carnot, the 'organiser of victory.'

If the chief was always a soldier, so likewise (as regards the final process) it was always by the hands of soldiers—though organised in separate bodies—that the Department ministered to troops. To execute works of all kinds, to maintain due order in camp, to find means of transport, to bring up ammunition, to provide for the soldier food, shelter, and clothing, to secure him medical care, and, in short, to supply every want of a French army when in the field, there were always attached to it some bodies of officers and men set apart for administrative duties and specially

trained for their respective tasks; but from the officer in command of the Intendance home, down to the bakers who baked bread for the troops, and the cobblers who mended their shoes, these functionaries, although busied in tasks like those performed by civilians, were still, in the strictest sense, military men, and as much a part of the force as any squadron of horse or any battalion of foot.

In such a Department as the one France possessed, the best means of enabling troops to live as well as to fight were likely to be well understood; and just as the Minister, when organising an army for foreign service, fixed the relative proportions of its cavalry, its infantry, and its artillery, so also, and with no less care, he determined the composition and strength of the administrative forces by which its wants would have to be met. At a time—the first days of November—when General Canrobert's numbers in the Crimea ranged somewhat under 42,000, he not only reckoned amongst them several hundreds of engineers and other military workmen,* but also five separate bodies of men exclusively engaged in ministering to the wants of the army, and these alone had a strength of nearly 1700.†

* The Engineers alone had a strength of 358, and there was besides a company of siege-park workmen, and a pontoon company. Of course the most prominent of the duties performed by the Engineers were those which engaged them in strife with the enemy; but whenever required, they might be employed upon 'ministering' tasks, as, for instance, in making a road or draining a camp.

† Viz., 1686. The five bodies composing this administrative force were 'Ambulances,' 'Subsistences,' 'Ouvriers d'administration,' 'Train 'des équipages militaires,' and 'Gendarmes.'

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Nor must it be forgotten, that even out of the number of combatants which the conscription brought into the army, there were always to be found men well qualified for administrative tasks, and well skilled too in those branches of industry which concern the maintenance of troops. The supplying hand of the service was called the Intendance, and commanded by a general officer.

The guiding energy of the administrative system reached down to the hands that were busied in what —as distinguished from the combatant tasks of a soldiery—one may call its domestic duties; for such cares, far from being allotted by accident or by mere random choice, attached always upon men who, though soldiers, were still in their several ways experienced and skilled artisans. Thus, for instance, whether serving at home or going through a campaign, French regiments always owed to the system one blessing very precious to health; for with them, or rather amongst them, there were ever in readiness the deft, practised, chosen hands that could transform sacks of flour into good leaven bread.*

A system thus highly organised might fail of course in its purpose; for the action of the most perfect war department may be hampered by an incompetent monarch who is suffered to meddle in business; and besides, none can take it for granted

* Napoleon laid great stress on the military value of leaven bread as compared with biscuit, going even the length of providing in some instances that bodies of masons competent to build baking ovens should accompany the march of his troops.

that an exertion of human will at the centre must be necessarily obeyed at the extremities with zeal and care; but the advantages secured by a well-planned and well-united machinery are obvious, and amongst them must be reckoned that treasury of apt knowledge which accumulates in a well-ordered office.

CHAPTER III.

THE WAR ADMINISTRATION OF ENGLAND.

I.

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The English system of military administration as existing before the quarrel with Russia.

It might be imagined that England, long accustomed to the business of shipping off troops to all the quarters of the globe, and from time to time carrying on wars against distant nations, must have had smoothly working in her capital every wheel of the official machinery required for a seabord campaign; but the actual truth is that, since the peace of 1815, all the armies she engaged in hostilities had been made to depend upon centres of administrative power established in India and the colonies;* so that hence it was possible for her to be a fighting and conquering State during a period of nearly forty years without having at home in London or Westminster that mainspring of military operations which men call a War Depart-

* Our Indian establishments included a most able commissariat force —one organised upon the military plan, and versed in great transactions. It was not in Hindostan exclusively, but in other vast regions, as, *e.g.*, in China and Persia, that England used for war purposes her splendid Indian establishments. The admirably managed expedition of 1868 against Abyssinia was maintained by English money, but owed its arrangements to Anglo-Indian organisation, and Anglo-Indian experience.

ment. Before her quarrel with Russia, she indeed had the Horse Guards—a Royal, not 'Government' Office, of which we shall have to hear more, and besides, a pair of Departments, which connected themselves with the mighty word 'War' by three quaintly distinctive prepositions;* but their bellicose names were deceptive. Well-informed people knew—though the printed lists might not so tell them—that the 'Minister of the Colonies' was also the 'Minister of War;' and that, though lying dormant in peace-time, his authority over the conduct of military business might at once be awakened, if England should take the field against a European Power; but they also knew equally well that, so far as concerned its machinery, the Department over which he presided was only in actual truth what its more peaceful title imported—that is, the 'Colonial Office'—an office most ably manned, but devoted to the conduct of our relations with the colonies, and not versed in the business of war.† And again, what men called the 'War Office,' with the 'Secretary at War' for its chief, transacted, it is true, some matters of business

The Ministry of War and Colonies.

The War Office.

* The so-called 'Colonial Minister' was also the Minister *of* War, or, in other phraseology, the Secretary of State *for* War, whilst the chief of the War Office was the Secretary *at* War.

† That one of them, however—Sir Frederick Elliot—had both the gifts and the experience which must have enabled him to render invaluable services in constructing the machinery of the new War Department—see footnote, *post*, p. 43. To show how strong the permanent Staff of the Colonial Office was in intellectual power, I need do no more than say that it comprised, amongst others, Herman Merivale and Frederick (afterwards Sir Frederick) Elliot (both now, alas! no more), Frederick Rogers (now Lord Blachford), Henry (now Sir Henry) Taylor, and Clinton (now Sir Clinton) Murdoch.

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connected with the uniforms of our troops, and a few other minor details, but was, under its general aspect, a merely financial department entrusted with the duty of keeping our military expenditure within the limits sanctioned by Parliament, and exempt, one may say, from all the anxious labour of maintaining an army in the field.*

There were, however, many other Departments—some great and some small—which had more claim to pass for 'belligerent' than the innocent, account-keeping 'War Office.' In the ancient Tower of London, amongst the clubs in Pall Mall, in the Strand, in Whitehall, and besides in the neighbouring purlieus, there were nests of public servants transacting their respective bits of England's military business: some, for instance, in strength at the Horse Guards, some holding the Ordnance Department, some ensconced at the Admiralty, yet engaged in land-service duties, some busied under the roof of the Treasury, others burrowing in several small streets, yet somehow providing for our army, pay, pensions, adjudgment of claims; the means of transport by sea; stores, clothing, equipments, recruits; surgeons, surgical implements, medicines; courts-martial, chap-

* Evidence of Mr Sidney Herbert, 4th Rep., Sebas. Comm., 19, 756. Mr Sidney Herbert, though presiding over this somewhat powerless office, was a member of the Cabinet; and, his personal qualities ensuring him great weight with his colleagues, he proved able to render excellent service in the business of the war; but his power of doing all this good resulted, as I have said, from his personal qualities, and not from any strength that there was in the office he chanced to hold. If only for the frank, courageous, and unswerving support that he gave to Miss Nightingale's great enterprise, his memory would be dear to the country.

lains, Church services; but there was not, until war approached, any high, overruling authority that bound up the aggregate number of all these scattered offices into anything like a real unit of administrative power. Far from always appealing for guidance to some paramount chief, they rather co-operated with one another, and this, too, in a highly English spirit of independence, each maintaining with firmness the integrity of its little dominions, and expressing in able despatches to coequals over the way, or perhaps at the end of the street, all those delicately shaded varieties of request, pressure, warning, remonstrance, which diplomatists well know how to choose when they speak in the name of great States.

II.

Causes which prevented England from having a real War Department.

That which brought England's war administration into this dishevelled plight was the monarchical surface of her polity—a surface so deceptive to a succession of princes with minds which construed words literally, that it encouraged them in their tenacity of rights growing every day less and less fit to be actually exercised in this country. England almost cruelly tantalised them. With one hand, and in the name of the law, she gave much, whilst with the other, and in the name of Custom, or Necessity, or Common-sense, she hastened to take back her gifts; so that, if for example, when welcoming her first German king to his capital, she showed him the pastures at Knights-

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bridge, and told him Hyde Park was his property, she was sure before long to warn him that, if over that same Hyde Park he were to exercise the full rights of ownership, such a venture would cost him his crown. She apprised her sovereigns of their large executive powers in terms so broad as to give them specious ground for imagining that they might exercise over our army, not simply a constitutional authority, but—extravagant as the pretension may seem in these days—an actual, personal sway; and impressions thus created were all the more dangerous because in mere law, as distinguished from the higher State sanction, they were sound beyond dispute. Ambiguous language was rife. People—some of them speaking in one sense, and some in another—could always concur in forms of speech which allowed the right of the Crown to command and administer such armed forces as Parliament might choose to provide; but this formidable power—this power by which all other powers might be trampled down into nothingness—was it one that could really be exercised after the manner of autocrats, by the king himself acting in person, by some son, some brother, some cousin, some spouse, some favourite of the sovereign? Or, was it not rather a part of that State authority which appertains indeed to the Crown, yet must only be exerted through Ministers, through advisers responsible to Parliament?

To concede the first alternative fully would have been to surrender in terms the very kernel of English freedom; but, until recent times, the nation did not

prove so clear-seeing as to know what the principle was which—against the stress of mere law—it ought to enforce upon the Crown. Down to even a period so late as the year 1872, the part of our constitutional polity which applies to this delicate subject was only forming, not formed.*

Our ancestors had been always alive to the danger of allowing an army to remain continuously under the personal direction of a sovereign; and in old times—not having then found any better or less trenchant security against royal misconduct—they simply provided that there should be no 'standing army' at all, or, at all events, none of such magnitude as to be a fit instrument for enabling a king to play the traitor. Fondly loving a campaign at short intervals, and willingly granting the means, they yet held fast to their liberties, and at the close of each war, had the heart to disband their army, or cut it down to an insignificant strength. Of course, this national habit of alternately raising and breaking up armies involved an enormous waste of military power; and the increasing complexity of a civilisation ever striving to convert given thousands of recruits into a more and more brilliant machine, made it every day clearer and clearer that—despite all the evils and dangers of such an institution—a 'standing army'—whether so called or not—was essential to the wellbeing of England.† Now, concurrently with the growth of

* The Act of Parliament bearing on a part of the subject passed in 1870, but the Orders in Council required were, some of them, of later date, and the change was hardly complete until 1872.

† The parenthetical words of the above sentence allude, of course, to

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this modern necessity, our people, though by slow, doubtful steps, had been approaching the idea of what we now mean when we speak of 'constitu-'tional government;' and the path they thus followed was one that would bring them in time to a solution of that problem — that once stubborn, difficult problem — which sought to reconcile the existence of a 'standing army' with the safety of English liberties; for, apparently, there could be little danger of having to see a battalion file in between the two doorkeepers of the House of Commons, if our troops—like any other public servants —were altogether withdrawn from the personal control of the sovereign, and placed frankly under his Ministers,—that is, under men approved, nay, almost nominated by Parliament, and to Parliament distinctly responsible.

It so happened, however, that the development of the constitutional principle lagged greatly in rear of the changes which made a 'standing army' essential; and the Hanover princes apparently—dreaming heavy, German dreams in our palaces—thought to have more or less the advantages of both modern innovation and ancient prerogative—a standing army in readiness, and a personal right to command it without the intervention or counsel of what we now call

the expedient—that of taking the vote for only one year at a time—by which statesmen hoped to prevent our national forces from becoming a 'standing army.' Lord Somers, I think, was the author of the contrivance; and its operation is such, that in any year any *one* branch of the Legislature (as, for instance, the House of Commons) can disband the whole army by a simple negative vote.

the 'Ministry.'* Seen under the light of these days the contention was nothing less than that the royal power of commanding and administering our army should stand excepted from the scope of constitutional government; and from the time when the rights and the duties of a responsible Ministry began to be even dimly apprehended, it proved visibly impossible that statesmen of the quality of those who owe their political existence to the will of Parliament would consent to form the 'Government' of a sovereign entrusting them only by halves—consent to be a mere row of clerks, with a—possibly absurd—king above them, disposing of their country's armed forces at his mere will and pleasure.

If a sovereign after William of Orange had so relied upon what I have called the 'monarchical surface'

* Upon the negotiation with Lord Grenville on the 31st of January 1806, for the formation of 'The Talents' Administration, George III. seems to have put forward this royal claim with care and precision, maintaining 'that the army had been kept distinct from the other 'branches of the administration since the time of the first Duke of 'Cumberland, and had been considered as under the immediate control 'of the king, through the Commander-in-Chief, without any right of 'interference on the part of the Ministry except in matters relating to 'the levying, clothing, and paying of the troops.' Upon this, Lord Grenville broke off; and it might appear at first sight that on the 3d of February the king abandoned his claim; but this was not the case. He consented to let Ministers propose what they wished, but stipulated that 'no changes in the government of the army should be carried into 'effect without his knowledge and approbation.'—See Ann. Reg., 1806, p. 25 *et seq.* The statement, I think, bears marks of having been furnished (whether directly or otherwise) by Lord Grenville himself. I observe that, owing no doubt to their long exclusion from office, Whig members, after the close of the great war, were in ignorance of the practice which withdrew our army from the command of the 'State,' and gave it to the 'personal king.'

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of our laws as to think of conducting a foreign or civil war without the guidance or approval of a responsible Ministry, he would probably have undergone such coercion as must have acclerated the ripening of constitutional principles, and made it plain beyond cavil that the command of our army belonged to the king's government, and not to the personal king.

But this question between kings and statesmen was never pushed to extremities; and each side, indeed, had a motive for conceding a good deal to the other one. Under the reigns of princes personally incompetent to conduct a campaign, sagacious courtiers saw that, whatever right of personal command they might claim for their master in peace-time, the business—the grave business—of war must be entrusted to responsible Ministers; whilst, on the other hand, there was a counter-eddy of military sentiment running always in the opposite direction—running always in favour of the 'personal,' as distinguished from the genuine 'State' sovereign. In a matter so delicate, so momentous as the devotion of the army, it was right that public men should at least hear—though not blindly follow—the opinions of those who saw danger in making it too glaringly plain that a Cabinet formed of civilians was the real commander-in-chief, and of those, too, who judged it important that commissions in the army should seem to have a more distinctly royal origin than appointments conferred by a Minister; whilst, moreover, all knew that from the general commanding an army down to even the

youngest recruit, soldiers gave a more willing allegiance to a master described in the concrete than to one shadowed out in the abstract; preferred service under a man to service under the State, and would rather turn out for 'King George,' than obey what men called 'the Government.' CHAP. III.

This soldier-side aspect of the question afforded—not, indeed, a good warrant, but at all events—specious excuses for assenting to a relaxed application of constitutional principles; and, on the whole, as we shall presently see, our sovereigns on the one side, and our constitutional Ministers on the other, found a way of coming to terms; but they did so by agreeing to divide the control of our land forces between the king and the king's government, thus destroying, of course, that unity of command which is necessary for the well working of an office; and on the other hand, the partition, as we shall see, was not so effected as to lay the foundations of even a clear dual system; for, there being a severance of the royal authority without a corresponding allotment of the establishments under it, the two masters (by means of 'requisitions'), might be bawling, as it were, both at once to the same servants, and distracting them with double orders not only of different import, but likely enough to clash.

Thus it was that our war administration fell into the disjointed state we have had to observe; and, as satrapies become petty kingdoms when the paramount authority is divided and weakened, so also amongst the military offices dispersed over London at the out-

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break of the war, there were some found enjoying the bliss of being almost independent, because during many a year they had been left altogether ungoverned by a Minister really chief over all.

If the endeavour to keep our army apart from the governance of responsible 'Ministers' had achieved full success, the polity of this country must have crystallised into a monarchy after some Continental model, and in that case, of course—whatever the fate of our liberties—there might have been constructed a highly efficient War Department; but, being only half won, the Court victory brought about and prolonged that dismemberment of our military administration for which we have had to account. The 'personal king' (in late times) having never been suffered to handle a complete War Department himself, was yet always unhappily strong enough to prevent the genuine 'State king' from having one in his stead; and thus, owing to what yet survived of the old contention between Courtiers and Parliamentarians, between Divine Right and Liberty, England, falling between the two stools, was left to toil on as best she could without the great engine required for an efficient administration of war.

III.

The instrument by which George III. and his successors kept a personal grasp on our army was one called the 'Staff at Headquarters,' but more

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The Horse Guards.

generally known as the 'Horse Guards.' Not forming any part of the 'Government,' but wielding, nevertheless, a large share of the sovereign's military power, this Office held some of the functions which are commonly entrusted to a War Department, but it also performed the duty of a Headquarter Staff, commanding all our cavalry and infantry. With due warrant as regarded expenditure (for which concert with the 'Government' was necessary) this same Royal Office provided for the raising, the training, the equipment, and the discipline of horse and foot; and besides, undertook other kinds of administrative business, for, by means of 'requisitions,' it had power to set in motion several other departments of State. As though to complete the unwholesome severance, and to withdraw our army absolutely from not only the rule but from even the fair enticements of constitutional government, custom suffered — with a strange equanimity — that the Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards should alone take his sovereign's pleasure upon the choice of all officers, from the field-marshal down to the ensign.*

The Horse Guards served as an Office in which the 'personal king' transacted his army business, and was scarcely in any large sense a Department of State, having in it not even one member of the

* This sentence is not meant to convey more than its strictly *literal* import; for we shall see that, though the Commander-in-Chief always 'took the sovereign's pleasure,' his act had to be, in some cases, governed by the 'compromise' afterwards mentioned. With respect to the arrangements under which the Commander-in-Chief *now* takes the Queen's pleasure, see footnote, *post*, at the close of chap. iv.

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responsible Government, and owning simply the king —the 'personal' king—as its master, with, by way of vice-master, a general or field-marshal, who, in plainly-confessed derogation of the constitutional principle applied as a rule to State counsels, was allowed to advise the king behind the backs of his Ministers, and from the king—the actual personal king—had always to take his orders. Whether owing its conception directly to a foreign designer, or only copied by natives from some foreign model, this establishment in its structure and attitude was so military that it seemed hardly English—seemed indeed a stiff plant from Berlin grafted into the life of free Westminster. As though for a civil war already begun, the field-marshal or general commanding in chief was supported by a well-chosen Staff, with an organisation which he always maintained upon the footing of a Headquarters Camp, having under him his adjutant-general, his quartermaster-general, his military secretary, his host of efficient though subordinate officers, his aides-de-camp personally attending him, his cavalry orderlies waiting to fly off at a word with despatches;* and—whether importing a vow to 'have it out, some day or other, 'with the damnable Parliamentarians,' or for some other less warlike purpose concealed from inquiring

* The Staff always wore plain clothes—not uniforms—but this was far from being an unwarlike arrangement. When the Duke of Wellington undertook the defence of London on the 10th of April 1848, he not only avoided the display of Staff uniforms, but caused aides-de-camp to be disguised as common-looking fellows, so that they might pass in the streets without attracting attention.

civilians—there sat all day in alcoves, open only on the side of the street, two ponderous troopers on horseback—riding each about twenty-two stone—who eternally, steadily, cheerfully looked across the gay road at Whitehall towards the site of the historic scaffold.

The power of the 'personal' king thus wielded by him at the Horse Guards was not much abridged in peace-time by the compromise we shall have to record; for except when war raged or was threatening, our regiments of cavalry and infantry remained always withheld from the control of the responsible Government, and kept ready in the hands of the sovereign. It was well that the liberties of the people depended upon something stronger than mere legal defences; for, so far as concerned its lawfulness, the Prerogative in force at the 'Horse Guards' was quite unassailable, and yet the Horse Guards in peace-time kept all our institutions, including what men called our 'Government,' at the mercy of force, at the mercy of royal whim, at the mercy of royal treason.*

The relations between the Crown and the Parliament have long been so good, that the contingency of a rupture between them could hardly have been made the subject of grave, solemn warning in recent times without bringing down ridicule on the alarmist; but the mountains and mountains of obstacle which rendered the hypothesis so extravagant, were other than legal—were other than 'con-

* See in the Appendix some further statements as to the constitution of the Horse Guards.

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'stitutional' safeguards. The well-meant expedient of authorising the maintenance of troops for only a year at a time did not long suffice to prevent them from constituting a real 'standing army;' and our public men—put off their guard by the stealthiness of the encroachment, or the specious contrivance that veiled it — neglected to take care that the formidable institution thus becoming substantially permanent should be withdrawn from the control of the personal—that is, the irresponsible sovereign. Out of all the three arms it was over our artillery only that the lulled Constitution of England kept even one sentry at watch.* The other two arms of the service were under the personal sovereign, and not ruled by what men call the 'Government.'

Living—happily—in the reign of a sovereign who never played false, our people are, moreover, so strong that the contingency of their being trampled down into a state of subjection by their own English army seems too absurdly remote to be worthy of a busy man's thought; but, if passing through the Romagna, one would scarce grudge a look at the rivulet which once showed where lawfulness ended, where usurpation began; and so here, having come on a landmark in constitutional England, one perhaps ought to spare it a glance. This is how the old border line ran:—

A king, who was traitor at heart, and intended to undertake civil war, might have looked with some

* The 'Clerk of the Ordnance,' who was a member of the 'Govern-'ment.' In earlier times, the 'Master-General of the Ordnance' had been a member of the Government, and, indeed, of the Cabinet.

complacency upon the military opportunities at his command; because having in his own royal hand, as distinguished from the hand of his 'Government,' not only his Staff at the Horse Guards—a ready and whetted instrument for the conduct of hostilities—but also all the cavalry and infantry within the four seas. All this power, I say, he would find ready gathered in his own hand, without having yet ventured upon any one act of lawlessness; but before proceeding to measures for suppressing Parliament, and securing the purse of the nation, he might naturally wish to feel easy in the artillery arm, and would perhaps send a company, or a corporal's guard to drive in, or capture, the outpost which 'Government' kept at the Ordnance.* Doing that, he of course would be passing—overtly passing—the Rubicon; but he would enter upon his civil war with great military advantages, because choosing his own time, taking the country by surprise, and assailing an unarmed people with splendid troops long accustomed to regard him as their one supreme commander.†

Regarding all such dangers as fanciful, and not caring to learn that the division of authority between the 'personal' king and his 'Government' had hampered the machinery needed for administrative busi-

* See the last footnote.

† These were some of the temptations to crime which must have presented themselves to the mind of George III., if he really meant what he said when declaring—declaring in this very century!—that 'he had taken a positive determination not to admit Mr Fox into his 'councils even at the hazard of civil war.'—'Rose's Diary,' vol. ii. p. 156. See also the king's reiteration of this resolve (which however he had to abandon in the next year but one), ibid., p. 182.

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ness, our people calmly endured that this anomalous condition of things should go on existing in peace-time; but within living memory, no English sovereign has judged that the Prerogative represented at the Horse Guards could be suffered to use its power freely in time of war; for all saw that the 'Ministers' (through whom means of fighting would have to be obtained from Parliament) must be the men held to account for the conduct of any military operations undertaken by the State, and that along with the burden there must needs be corresponding power. Accordingly (unless times of peace could be expected to last for ever) there was but one way in which the Prerogative exerted at the Horse Guards could be—even partly—preserved, and that was by throwing it into abeyance so often as occasion required,—by, in other words, taking care that when used for high State purposes, and especially for the great purpose of war, it should be subordinated to the will of the 'Government.' So, upon the whole, there resulted a compromise between the Crown and the 'Government,' which was from time to time renewed, and almost, one may say, continued as an accepted tradition. Under the terms of this compromise the 'personal king' retained ostensibly the whole of his power, but the successive commanders-in-chief at the Horse Guards who there represented his interests, were accustomed to engage verbally that for any of the higher commands down to that of a brigadier-general inclusively, no name should be recommended to the sovereign until it had been

Standing compromise between the Horse Guards and the 'Government.'

approved by the Secretary of State; and that from the moment of taking up arms, the whole conduct of the war, including, of course, the disposition of our troops, should rest with the Ministry.

Quaint expedient of the Letter of Service.

The change of masters to which a general became subjected, when accepting a command in the field, was pointed out to him by the chief at the Horse Guards in a document of time-honoured form which men called the Letter of Service—a letter which began by apprising him that the king had been 'graciously 'pleased to appoint him to command a detachment 'of his army to be employed upon a particular service,' and then at once handed him over to his country's Parliamentary sovereigns by enjoining him 'to 'carry into effect such instructions as he might re-'ceive from his Majesty's Ministers.'* These contrivances bore the true English stamp, being visibly, overtly resultant from opposed volitions trying hard to endure coexistence, and withal completely evasive of everything like a 'sound principle,' yet apt for the need of the moment, and successfully dealing with a problem which close reasoners would reject as insoluble. It was wholesome, some thought, that the army should deem itself the servant of the personal, as distinguished from the Parliamentary sov-

* It was by a 'Letter of Service' in this form that Sir Arthur Wellesley was despatched upon a 'particular service' (the Peninsula) in 1809; and that in 1815 the same commander (then Duke of Wellington) was placed under the orders of 'H.M.'s Ministers' with a view to the war in Flanders. Lord Raglan's letter of service was dated the 9th of April 1854, and (with the substitution of 'queen' for 'king,' and 'her' for 'his') exactly in the above form.

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ereign, and appear to receive its orders through a chain of strictly military commanders;* whilst all statesmen, on the other hand, judged that the power of freely wielding that same army in war-time or in time of civil contention must be exercised without let or hindrance by Ministers responsible to Parliament. So, what people wished was in substance to make our troops hold with one master, yet faithfully serve the other; and, however rude, clumsy, or equivocal the reconciling process may look, these two seemingly incompatible objects were, both of them, really compassed.

General effect of the standing compromise.

From these mutual concessions it resulted that whilst outwardly and legally retaining its whole power over the army, and preserving a real autonomy in matters of discipline and in much of its patronage, the prerogative of the 'personal king' was subordinated to the rule of his 'Ministers' in the conduct of any war going on.

Upon the return of peace, our polity always relapsed, withdrawing from responsible Ministers that control over military business which they had exercised during the war, and bringing back the 'personal 'king' to his unguided rule at the Horse Guards.

Lord Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards, was no less willing than his predecessors to act upon the terms of the compromise already stated;† and indeed one may say that he practically

* See Lord Hardinge's opinion, Seb. Comm., 3d Rep., p. 231.

† There were three instances in which Lord Hardinge nominated officers to commands above that of colonel without first submitting

conceded some extension of the engagement relating to military patronage; for, although his promise in terms gave the Government a power of exclusion only, and not of selection, he was always, it seems, so willing to meet the Minister's wish that the Duke of Newcastle, by a little insistance, could enforce the nomination of any generals whom he and his colleagues might choose. *

The Ordnance.

Upon the 'Ordnance' in war-time there attached huge and manifold tasks; for it not only had to maintain in a state of efficiency the Artillery, the Engineers, and all men and things relating to fortifications and sieges, but to furnish, as Sir Hew Ross expressed it, 'the whole material of war for the army and the naval services;' † and concurrently with the change from peace to active hostilities which all at once threw on the office enormous burthens, it lost the guiding hand of a chief better skilled than any other then living in the transaction of our country's military business; for the 'Master-General' was no other than Lord Raglan, then commanding our army at a distant seat of war. This double trial at first seemed to weigh down the struggling Department; ‡ but it

their names to the Duke of Newcastle, but the omission occurred through 'inadvertence.'

* Seb. Comm, 4th Rep., p. 230.

† Seb. Comm., 4th Rep., p. 24. This Office in its complete state was called the 'Master-General and Board of Ordnance;' and the lengthiness of the title was tolerated because it helped to announce the fact that the 'Master-General' had power to overrule the 'Board.'

‡ In the absence of Lord Raglan, Sir Hew Ross ably presided; but as 'Lieutenant-General of the Ordnance,' he had not in that character

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happened that the responsible 'Government' was there ably represented by one of its members, and through him—Mr Monsell *—the will of the Duke of Newcastle was so effectually impressed that, with only a natural sigh at the thought of its expiring independence, the Board, whether approving or not, gave way to his requisitions; † nay, even—though with yet one sigh more—to his peremptory, verbal demands. ‡

The Victualling and the Transport sub-departments of the Admiralty.

There were two sub-departments of the Admiralty which had a large share in ministering to our land-service troops when ordered for duty abroad. One of these, called the 'Victualling' Office, provided many kinds of supplies, including biscuit, rum, and salt meat; whilst the other, the 'Transport' Office, engaged the vessels required for carrying men and stores over sea.

The Army Medical service.

There was a department subordinated to several others which, nevertheless, must be examined. The London or Headquarters Staff of the united Army and Ordnance Medical Departments consisted of a Director-General, with one assistant, and (in general) about six clerks. This humble little office was in itself well ordered, and Dr Andrew Smith, its able, laborious chief, did not merely use wisely and well all the power he had by strict right, but, whenever occasion required, stepped freely beyond his marked

powers so large as those of the 'Master-General;' he could not overrule the Board.

* Mr Monsell—now Lord Emly—was 'Clerk of the Ordnance,' and in that character a member of the Board.

† Seb. Comm., 4th Rep., p. 91. ‡ Ibid., p. 33.

bounds. He was never, it seems, overruled when nominating for medical offices and commissions, but in other respects he had little or no autonomy, and lived always in acknowledged subjection to several departments of State;* whilst, on the other hand, his power to command unquestioning obedience from administrators of inferior grade could hardly be said to extend beyond the six desks of his clerks; for the very purveyors imagined that, as against a man called indeed a 'Director-General,' yet subordinated to many masters, and meagrely provided with salary, they might set up an independent authority;† and although he might be wanting supplies kept in store by another department, he could not go thither straight in order to lodge his requisition, but had to set it travelling circuitously, and begin by a prayer to the Horse Guards.‡

The truth is that our economic reformers when discomfited in their earlier enterprises, had so absolutely inverted the cry of 'Peace to the cottage and war 'to the throne' that, having failed to bring down the strong, they went and attacked the weak. They left standing the emptiest pomps and vanities of their country, and applied their nipping parsimony to strictly useful institutions, including that medical service upon which, in the times then to come, the

* There were *five*, he said, at the least, that he clearly was bound to obey, and he knew not 'how many more.'—Seb. Comm., 2d Rep., p. 392.

† Ibid., p. 395-409.

‡ Ibid., p. 397. The course of the 'circuitous travelling' will be shown, *post*, p. 49 *et seq.*

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health and the lives of our sick and wounded soldiery would have to depend. The service became depressed. State parsimony, it is true, did not blunt the professional skill, did not tire out the generous devotion of our army surgeons, but it weakened their self-confidence and authority, and to weaken their self-confidence and authority was to deprive them of that power of bold innovation which is hardly less needful than gunpowder at the beginning of a war. In departments not animated by political ambition, public servants are prone to imagine that they can measure the official authority really vested in one of their number, by seeing how Government labels him in the figures denoting his salary;* and whether men applied that coarse test, or looked merely to the Government rules for distinguishing master from servant, they in either case saw ground for judging that, despite the 'mere importance' of his duties, the Director-General of the Army and Ordnance Medical Departments could hardly be a potentate entitled to earnest attention. We shall see the result. We shall see the Director-General preparing early for the adoption of measures soon perceived to have been exactly those needed for the care of our stricken soldiery, yet—because poorly armed with authority—striving always, or too often, in vain.†

* I have always understood this to be the case, but am not aware that any suggestion of the kind was ever made by Dr Andrew Smith, or any member of the medical service.

† See *post*, p. 49 *et seq.* With respect to the subject of stipend above adverted to, it appears that Dr Andrew Smith's predecessor, Sir James M'Gregor, had £2000 a-year, besides £220 per annum as physician

In other ways the parsimony of the State had prepared an evil time for our sick and wounded troops. By not only stinting the remuneration of its medical officers, but keeping their numbers so low as to have to refuse them too often a short leave of absence, even when health and life were at stake—by turning a deaf ear to their painful appeals—and, finally, by resenting, or seeming to resent their complaints,—it brought down these good public servants to a habit of mute, soldierly resignation, which, because carrying with it a tendency to endure the most terrible evils instead of struggling fiercely against them, was destined to prove but too baneful under the trials of war.

And again, as concerned all the functionaries empowered to expend public moneys for the medical wants of our army, they had been so constantly, so rigidly schooled by a straitening system of audit as to become cramped by long habit, and incapable of launching out suddenly into free, unrestrained expenditure.* The effect of this cramp on his soul was frankly confessed by the Director-General when he said it took him five months to make himself believe that he was really, really empowered to expend im-

to the Portsmouth garrison; but afterwards the economisers stepped in, and Dr Andrew Smith, the Director-General at the time of the war, had only £1200 per annum. This stipend (as the experiment proved) was sufficient—*in* the particular instance—to command all the requisite ability, zeal, and devotion; but, as may well be supposed, it did nothing towards conferring *power*.

* 'The screw,' their chief said, 'had been so tightly applied to me 'that I could not believe myself when I knew that I could spend money 'without going through the regular forms.'—*Ubi supra*, p. 410.

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mense sums of money.* This dread of disbursement was destined to prove a grave evil.

On the whole, then, we see that the medical officers of our army were able, devoted men, and headed by a sagacious Director-General who showed men what ought to be done; but the State—cold and frugal in its dealing with this branch of the service—neglected to arm it with power; and to leave it wanting in power was to foredoom our stricken soldiery.

The Commissariat.

Amongst the many and dispersed offices taking part in the transaction of military business, the Treasury had a prominent place, because that great department of State stood charged with the formation and maintenance of our Commissariat Service. This Service — neglected and depressed in former years — had been happily raised up into an excellent state by the able hand and strong will of Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Assistant Secretary of the Treasury: but despite his repeated appeals, its field of operation had been persistently kept within the territorial limits which he found established when he came into office; and accordingly, at the time when this new war with Russia had already become closely imminent, there was indeed a Commissariat force for Ireland and for the Colonies, but none for England or Scotland, and none for foreign service, nay, not even the nucleus or rudiment or framework of any such body;† so that any one charged to organise

* A saying recorded by Mr Sidney Herbert, and mentioned by him before the Sebastopol Committee.

† Our troops quartered in Great Britain were supplied by arrange-

the Commissariat force required for campaigning in Europe, would have to create it anew from head to foot. To a Government preparing an army for foreign service, and seeking out anxiously the names of a few Commissariat officers not already on duty beyond sea, and not retired on half-pay, the Army List was an absolute blank.

There not being in all Great Britain any embryo of a Commissariat force, it became necessary to form one in haste out of scattered elements; and, Authority having laid it down flatly that for such a creation not weeks, not months, but even years would be needed, there seemed to be ground for discouragement;* but, on the other hand, there were some favouring circumstances, and the rare energy of Sir Charles Trevelyan proved equal to the occasion. The half-pay list included the name of Mr Filder, an officer sixty-four years of age, yet vigorous, active, and of commanding ability, who had been present at Talavera, Albuera, Salamanca, Vittoria, 'Pyrenees,' Nivelle, Nive, Orthes, Toulouse; and if the first of those battle-fields—Talavera—was a name of glory for our arms, it was also one that suggested another kind of experience very terrible and yet very precious

Sir Charles Trevelyan's rapid creation of a Commissariat force for foreign service.

ments concerted between the Board of Ordnance and the regiment. The Ordnance, after communication with the regimental commander, made the requisite contract, and the rest of the task was mainly performed by the regimental quartermasters.

* Sir Arthur Wellesley, I think, laid it down that although Portugal could furnish all the supplies required for 30,000 men, the formation of a Commissariat body competent to acquire, to collect, to move, and distribute such supplies, would be an affair of two or three years.

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for a Commissariat officer.* The Treasury appointed Mr Filder to serve with our army in the East as its Commissary-General; and, to form part of his staff, there were drawn from the same retired list a few other excellent officers. In the search still continued for men not devoid of experience, Sir Charles Trevelyan's next expedient was to recall some of our best Commissariat officers from the Colonies; but this last resource was one that, by reason of the distances requiring to be traversed, could not, of course, produce its full effect all at once.† Still in amply good time there were collected Commissariat officers to the number of forty, and these of such excellent quality that Sir Charles Trevelyan was able to say—and this from him is high praise—was able to say he felt 'proud of them.' This judgment did not mislead him, for both these, and the other Commissariat officers who subsequently acceded to the force, proved to be not only (as might have been taken for granted) men of high integrity, but extremely able and active. The number of officers, much too scanty at first, was soon rendered more and more insufficient, not only by illness and death, but also by those changes of the Government plans which

* Under its Commissariat aspect, the Talavera campaign was beyond measure disastrous. Sir Arthur Wellesley had trusted for food to some promises made him by Spaniards in authority; and our soldiery—starving—paid the penalty of his mistake. See Napier's 'Peninsular War.'

† Of course, during peace-time, the duties of Commissariat officers in the Colonies had not been in most respects similar to those they would have to perform in a campaign; but there was evident advantage in obtaining the aid of gentlemen already engaged in this department of the public service.

increased the strength of the army sent out from 10,000 at first to 26,000 soon afterwards, and ultimately to a yet greater strength; so that the accession of officers from time to time returning from the Colonies was always much more than counterpoised by the augmented demands of an augmented army.* Again, it proved difficult to raise in these islands a fitting number of the 'subordinates' through whom the Commissariat officers would have to perform their work; but some competent men were obtained by drawing them from the ranks of the police, as well as from other sources; and in the end there resulted a Commissariat force much too scanty, it is true, in the number of its officers and English 'subordinates,' and, of course, as a body, much wanting in that priceless experience which their chief and a few others possessed, but, upon the whole, so able and willing that (with the aid of the foreign assistants from time to time hired) they found means to achieve an amount of difficult and intricate work which, in proportion to their numerical strength, may be soberly described as immense, and this too (so far as I know) without committing any grave failure that could justly be laid to their charge.

Duties, powers, and status of a Commissariat force administer-

Although the Commissariat body thus collected for foreign service was a new and almost sudden creation, it fell at once under the code which had long before stated the duties of any force so engaged. The

* Thus, after a while, the arrival of competent men withdrawn from the Colonies enabled Sir C. Trevelyan to raise the number of Commissariat officers sent to the East from 40 to 49; but by that time the army they had to supply had swollen, I think, to a strength of 20,000.

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ing to an English army in the field.

burthen was huge. Upon the Commissariat serving with an English army in the field, there devolved charge of the military chest with the task of meeting all the needed expenditure, including the pay of the troops, and of entirely supplying the army—supplying it with food for man and beast, with fuel, with light, with the means of land-transport—land-transport for not only all kinds of stores, but for heavy guns and siege materials, for ammunition, for field equipments, for the needed supplies of provisions and forage and clothing, for the removal of the sick and the wounded. These were all of them tasks which normally, and as matter of course, attached upon the Commissariat; but besides, it was their duty to purchase or hire and bring up every manner of thing which the unforeseen necessities of the army or the orders of its chief might require.

Of course, the performance of duties thus momentous involved the efficiency, the welfare, nay, the very existence of the army, and it was of necessity that any man undertaking such tasks should be armed with great power. By the authority of his own will, and with the purse of the United Kingdom in his unrestrained hand, the Commissary-General could ransack for the needed supplies any country in the world that he chose — any country at least except one. And even from England — for that was the excepted country—he might endeavour to draw supplies; but the difference was that, when doing so, he would not be commanding subordinates or directing mere agents, but addressing himself to the Treasury — in other words, to his official superiors, and by

them his expressed desire to have things despatched from home to the army might be criticised, disapproved, and resisted. The practice thus in one respect limiting Mr Filder's authority was destined to be a source of evil.

The Commissariat, officers and men, serving with our army were amenable in a general way to military rule, and enjoined to obey any order that might be specially given them by the military chief, or by any other man so placed over them by his military rank and seniority as to be their 'commanding officer;' but, subject to that obligation, they owed all allegiance to their civilian chiefs in Whitehall; and accordingly, the Commissary-General corresponded direct with the Treasury. He was armed with authority to address, when occasion required, the Governments of Foreign States. From the Commissary-General down to the clerks of three years' service, every Commissariat officer in the field had a rank which (according to his grade), corresponded with either that of a brigadier-general, a lieutenant-colonel, a major, a captain, a lieutenant, or an ensign, and they all wore a military uniform.*

The old army offices without experience derived from recent campaigns.

Thus, then, the War Branch of the 'Department 'of War and Colonies,' the War Office, the Horse Guards, the Ordnance, the Victualling Office, the Transport Office, the Army Medical Department, and, finally, the Treasury — these all were departments

* The change which withdrew the Commissariat from the Treasury to place it within the realms of the War Department, was theoretically ordained in the course of the summer, but did not come into real operation until the 22d of December 1854.

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which, along with many others doing duty in narrower spheres, undertook the great business of maintaining within the limits of Europe, though still far away beyond seas, the land-service part of the war; and, our system having always been such as to prevent the metropolis from being a centre of action for the sustenance of conflicts in Asia, our administrators in London and Westminster had to enter all at once on their task without any of the priceless experience derived from recent campaigns.

IV.

Changes made in our system of war administration.

In June 1854, our Government determined that the business of 'War' and 'Colonies' should no longer be charged upon the same Minister; and the Duke of Newcastle—the then holder of the double office—being left free to choose between the two functions, gave up the 'Colonies,' and was thenceforth (as he had been from the first), the Secretary of State for War, but no longer charged with colonial business. As an instrument for preparing and conducting hostilities, the authority of the office he thus retained had indeed been long out of use, but still was by all fully recognised; and the good sense of his colleagues and of public men generally, did not fail to strengthen his hands; so that, whether by actual force of law, or by virtue of the general understanding that obtained, he was able to press very cogently upon all the other military departments,

The Duke of Newcastle Secretary of State for War.

The authority he exercised.

and either in terms to command them, or in other ways bend their will. Indeed one may say, speaking generally, that there was not amongst the old army offices any really pernicious desire to maintain inconvenient privileges, and, on the contrary, so general a determination to toil zealously in the business of the war under the guidance of the Secretary of State that, except at the 'Ordnance' (which proved at one time somewhat restive),* the Duke of Newcastle was but little embarrassed by obstructors. He always, sooner or later, proved able to enforce compliance by formally applying the united will of the 'Government' as his lever for constraining a department.†

General readiness of the old army offices to act under his guidance.

In authority, therefore, as we have now plainly seen, the Duke of Newcastle did not find himself wanting; but it was otherwise as regards the appliances of office; for upon quitting the Colonial Department, he did not carry with him the men of great and well-proved ability who then formed part

Want of official machinery at the disposal of the Duke of Newcastle.

* See *ante*, p. 32.

† The invaluable principle requiring that there shall be unity in the Government, or, in other words, that its members shall act homogeneously, is, as we all know, of modern growth, and its acceptance seems to have resulted—not at first from sound reasoning, but—from the practice long enforced by the personal ascendant of the second Pitt. When one of his Ministers was obstructed by a department of State, he did not appeal, as the Duke of Newcastle could have done, to the 'will of 'the Government,' but to a power much better understood in those days—the will of its great chief. At the Admiralty (where the Board had in strictness a right to withstand the First Lord by outvoting him), Lord Spencer at the time alluded to, both enforced compliance and (concretely) explained his principle by saying that, if further resisted, he would 'go to Mr Pitt.'

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of its staff,* and found no other staff awaiting him in what was to him a new realm. To use, until better lodged, he borrowed a set of rooms that formed part of the Treasury building, but rooms at first empty, having neither within them the men nor yet the cherished traditions that make a great department of State; and, even upon the supposition that he could at once treat the military offices at Westminster as sub-departments all bound to obey him, there still remained the fact that he had not the central machinery required for directing their energies. A War Minister without a War Ministry, he was in a predicament analogous to that of the French general who found himself suddenly called upon to act as the commander of an army in the hour of battle without having a headquarter staff.†

His capacity as a war administrator.

However, the Duke did not bend under the weight of the cares he assumed. His impetuous direction to go and 'lay siege' to Sebastopol is a fitting subject for criticism, and the course we shall see him adopt-

* There was one of these—Sir Frederick Elliot—who not only knew how to govern, and how to administer, but also had proved himself able to meet new demands on the public service by devising, constructing, and perfecting the new official machinery, which brought and kept emigration under careful State superintendence; and the fertile brain-power, the tact, the knowledge of men required for achieving such a task, were exactly what England needed when striving in haste to provide means of action for an inchoate War Department then consisting of simply nothing except its name and its chief.

† When Marshal M'Mahon was disabled by his wound at Sedan, General Wimpfen, by virtue of a dormant commission, succeeded to the command; but the officers of M'Mahon's staff judged it right to remain in attendance upon their wounded chief, and did not, therefore, place their services at the disposal of the new commander.

ing against Lord Raglan in a time of dire peril and misery, will have to be painfully judged; but as an administrator, striving hard night and day to meet the wants of the army, he certainly brought to his task zeal, boldness, prodigious activity, a healthy ambition, and—in many, if not in all matters—a fairly sound, rapid judgment, which did not desert him until he became disturbed by the roar of the popular voice.

Further changes made in our administrative machinery.

Our public men, seeing the mischiefs of a dispersed administration, endeavoured to concentrate official power—as, for example, by withdrawing the Commissariat from the Treasury to place it within the War Department;* and at a later period, by annexing to that same War Department the hitherto independent Board of Ordnance.† In the Admiralty, however, a change in the opposite direction was effected; for there, the sub-department transacting the business of sea-transport was re-elevated into a 'Board' with the degree of autonomy which had belonged to a similar dependency of the Admiralty in former times.‡

Yet whilst making these organic changes, men omitted to effect some practical improvements which in reality were much more imperatively needed. Thus, for instance, although requisitions demanding means of sea-transport flooded heavily down upon the Admiralty from seven distinct sources, no one

* This change took effect on the 22d of December 1854.

† This change took place in the early summer of 1855.

‡ This change was made in February 1855.

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seems to have perceived the expediency of collating these applications in the War Department, with the object of there determining their comparative urgency; and the consequence was, that supplies of the kind most imperatively needed by the army might be awaiting the result of Captain Milne's ceaseless endeavours to charter fresh vessels, whilst other stores not so much wanted were about to be shipped forthwith on board vessels already engaged.*

V.

The way in which the offices sought to perform the tasks of war administration.

It seems fitting to know how the offices dispersed over London and Westminster endeavoured to work out between them the tasks of a real War Department. Towards performing any business entrusted to it, each office exerted such powers as it happened to have of its own; and for what remained of the task, addressed 'requisitions' or less formal requests to some other department of State. Thus, for instance, if it were the will of the Government that their general commanding in the field should undertake a hostile operation, the Secretary of State for War could himself give the needed instruction by means of a simple despatch; but, whenever the object was to do acts of war administration—such, for instance, as sending out troops with guns, cartridges, clothing, provisions—the War Minister (being armed with no machinery of his own that could be used for

* Seb. Comm., 4th Rep., p. 257.

such purposes) had to shoot off a set of 'requisitions;' one to the Horse Guards for cavalry and infantry; a double one to the Ordnance for not only artillery and engineers, but also for equipments and munitions of war; one, again, to the Admiralty for shipping to carry our men over sea; and, finally, one to the Treasury enjoining the execution of measures for ensuring all the needed supplies, and the requisite means of land-transport.

And it was not by the one single shower of a War Minister's 'requisitions' that the whole of the work required could always be put in train; for the offices which received these appeals were, some of them, so circumstanced that they could not achieve the whole business committed to them by their own inherent power, and therefore (whilst performing themselves such part of the task as they could) they handed on the rest of the burthen to other departments by discharging a second flight of 'requisitions.' Thus the Horse Guards by their own power could furnish out horse and foot; whilst the Ordnance, too, without aid from other departments, could contribute artillery, ammunition, and some kinds of stores; but for means of sea-transport, both the Horse Guards and the Ordnance always necessarily appealed to the Admiralty: yet the Admiralty, if thus seemingly oppressed, could retort, so to speak, on the Ordnance, making giant demands for guns, stores, munitions of war. The Treasury (if no English provisions were wanted) would only have to instruct their own officer (the Commissary-General);

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but, whenever it happened that the provisions required were of a kind that should be supplied from England, a further step was necessary, and in that case the Lords of the Treasury made a double appeal to the Admiralty, demanding from its Victualling sub-department the needed supplies—salt meat, perhaps, or biscuits, or rum, or tons upon tons of pressed hay—and demanding also from its Transport sub-department the means of shipping off those things to a port near the seat of war.*

Though ostensibly only requests from one department to another, and therefore from equal to equal, these demands still expressed so conclusively the will of the aggregate Government, that the recipients in general met them with a loyal compliance; and accordingly, it may be said that the anomalous state of our military offices at the outbreak of the war did not really involve, after all, any actual clash of power.

Still, though treated as authoritative, these appeals were almost of necessity less cogent, less swiftly compelling than the peremptory 'word of command;' and the evil of the system was specially conspicuous in the cases where a department subordinated to others, yet called upon to initiate measures, had to work, as it were, uphill, by appealing to one of its

* The 'Victualling' sub-department of the Admiralty was under Mr Grant; and Captain Milne, who was one of the 'Sea Lords,' personally undertook the highly important charge of the transport business. The State possessed but few 'transport' vessels—at one time, I think, only three—and the means of despatching troops to the East had to be obtained almost wholly by appealing to private shipowners, and chartering their vessels.

rulers. Thus, if the Director-General of the Army Medical Department wished to furnish to our hospitals in the East some kinds of supplies, as, for instance, wine, sago, arrowroot, he had to send his purpose revolving in an orrery of official bodies: for first, he well knew, he must move the Horse Guards, and the Horse Guards must move the Ordnance, and the Ordnance must set going the Admiralty, and the Admiralty must give orders to its Victualling Office, and its Victualling Office must concert measures with the Transport Office, and the Transport Office (having only three transports) must appeal to our private shipowners, in the hope that sooner or later they would furnish the sea-carriage needed; so that then the original requisition becoming at last disentangled, might emerge after all from the labyrinth, and—resulting in an actual, visible shipment of wine, sago, arrowroot—begin to receive fulfilment.

When, so early as the 11th of May 1854, the Director-General submitted to the Horse Guards, in writing, a well-considered plan for ensuring the careful removal of the wounded and sick, by appropriating for the purpose beforehand due means of sea-transport; when he showed the expediency of stationing in convenient ports ships prepared for the reception of patients; and when, finally, speaking out in good time, he urged the establishment of hospitals at well-chosen spots, his appeals remained unanswered, and apparently provoked no attention.* When he asked that

* 2d Rep. Seb. Comm., pp. 415, 416. A sketch of the proper medical arrangements that should be made was also prepared by Mr Guthrie,

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competent and able-bodied men should be taken from the army to act as hospital orderlies, he was overruled.* When, as a substitute for the English soldiers thus refused him, he proposed recourse to a people whom he judged to be apt for the work, he was met by an objection which, unless put forward in jest, was itself fair game for the jester.† When, speaking with ample knowledge of the subject, he urged his well-founded conviction that men taken from the class of 'pensioners' would prove grossly unfit for the tasks of hospital orderlies, he gave the warning in vain; and from the pensioners—from the pensioners only—the hospital orderlies were chosen.‡ The officer primarily answerable for the error of disregarding these appeals was the Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards;§ but the Prime Minister, the Duke of Newcastle, Mr Sidney Herbert, the members of the Board of Ordnance,—all these, though not chargeable in the same distinct sense as Lord Hardinge, might still have been called to account for not having pressed the adoption of some such wise, opportune measures as those recommended by the Director-General; and

the distinguished President, for that year, of the College of Surgeons, who had served in the Peninsular war, and there acquired great experience. The sketch, it seems, was sent, so early as February, to the Duke of Newcastle, to Lord Raglan, and also to the Director-General.

* Ibid., p. 412.

† Ibid., p. 412. The men whose aid he proposed to seek were Armenians—a sober, gentle, well-conducted race; and the objection (quite absurd, if meant to apply to hospitals on the Bosphorus) was that, upon hearing firing, they would run away.—Ibid.

‡ Ibid., p. 412.

§ Because it was to the Horse Guards that the appeals were addressed.

the responsibility of public men thus became so dispersed, that just blame, if descending at all, fell in gentle and harmless spray.

A delinquent more guilty than any has been found, as we saw, in the State—in that State which had deadened the impact of an able director's will by making him a servant where it ought to have made him the master, by diffusing amongst many the power that should have been concentrated in his hands; and, finally, by holding him out to Whitehall, in the expressive language of 'salary' columns, as a public servant, hired cheaply to do an everyday kind of work—a public servant not empowered or encouraged to exert a wide sway in even the routine course of business, still less to become the disturber—the bold, headstrong, ruthless disturber—of forms, habits, customs, regulations, that England beyond measure needs when she passes from stagnant peace to court the troubles of war.

The way in which our dispersed system of war administration proved baneful.

Upon the whole, it may be said that the machinery of our war administration never came, as many people imagined, to anything like a 'dead-lock,' but its action —much wanting in smoothness—made grievous waste of that force which is beyond measure needed in war —the force of a strong human will.

VI.

We have said that the business of conducting hostilities against Russia was entrusted to departments

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unpractised in recent campaigns; but it must be added, that not even so much as a leaven of precious warlike experience was accepted from the great India Company. Owing largely, of course, to distances, but yet more to a tenacity of customs no longer wholesome, and a never-remitted pressure of selfish interests, the resources of a sovereignty which England had established in every quarter of the globe were kept so distinctly apart that scarce any one recognised the possibility of ever transposing them as occasion might require. In one book—a pink one—there was a list of officers belonging to the royal army which, so far as concerned the vital work of Intendance, was meagre almost to nothingness; whilst another book—a crimson one—contained a list of officers belonging to what was then the service of the East India Company,—men, some of them the most able campaigning administrators then known in the world, who had been engaged in great warlike operations; but—as though there were some law of heaven forbidding it—our authorities sincerely believed that of the gifted and experienced men in the crimson book not one, although present in England, and not needed for work in India, must be called to take part in a European war. Reminding one of the nations discovered by Gulliver they imagined that, happen what might, they must never go beyond the pink book; and from this curious superstition it resulted that, for the purpose of ministering to an army in Europe, the Power which, since the peace of 1815, had waged greater wars than

England's practice of forgoing the aid of her Indian officers and administrators in European war.

Result of this.

any other, was condemned to take the field as a novice.

Our troops tended upon the 'regimental' system.

Departments charged to nurture a soldiery thinly scattered over all quarters of the globe, could hardly, of course, take large units as the objects of their administrative care; and it was not on any collected army, or any collected divisions, or any collected brigades, but simply on each one of our regiments, regarded as a separate entity, that the State bestowed its care. In peace-time, this plan sufficed; but it was evident that, if a number of the regiments thus separately tended should be collected into an army, and charged with the tasks of war, the dispersive method of administration would be likely to find itself baffled; because troops brought together for service in the field require not only care vastly greater than that which would suffice them whilst scattered, but care differing also in kind; and besides, are so circumstanced that they cannot be advantageously reached—perhaps cannot be reached at all—by any mere clubbing together of the several administrative labours which, before concentration began, had well enough answered the purpose. Under such conditions, no mere increase of the old habitual toil performed by the Westminster offices was calculated to meet the new exigency. Accustomed to disperse their power by tending each regiment separately, they had not the kind of means needed for ministering to an army assembled in the field, wanting even, as it were, to begin with, what a factory man calls his 'plant'—the basis of a power

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required for putting other power in motion — the machinery for making machines.

The one good service our offices rendered;

Still, the Westminster Departments between them had been rendering the State one good service. Amidst all the havoc resulting from political exigencies they had still kept alive the prime element of Wellington's Peninsular army; for, although not allowed to preserve so much as even the framework of his administrative organisation, and left wanting in all the machinery for supplying and moving and tending troops sent out to undertake a campaign, they yet had upheld in full vigour our famous, time-honoured 'regiments' with the glory of the great days yet clinging to their names, their traditions, their colours; and accordingly, these clusters of offices, however quaint, rude, and ill suited for maintaining strong armies in the field, gave a curiously faithful expression to the mind of our strange, wayward people—a people not choosing in peace-time to stand prepared for war, yet determined nevertheless to be always prepared for a fight.

by always maintaining 'the 'regiments.'

CHAPTER IV.

A RETROSPECTIVE ENQUIRY.

I.

FEW will say that in outward appearance, the old official machinery which England brought out for use when taking up arms against Russia was a set of State engines well fitted for carrying on with effect the administrative business of war; but 'did 'not some such system exist, and was it not made 'to work brilliantly, in what have been called the 'great days?'

Many not only ask the question, but, until they are answered, prove loath to think ill of administrative institutions which sufficed, they imagine, for Pitt, and furnished means of action to Wellington. On the whole, it seems right that, although inviting a glance thrown back into earlier times, the question should not go unanswered.

First, then, did not some such system exist?

Our system of War administration at the time of the great con-

We shall see. The 'personal king' then, as afterwards, through his own Royal Office—the Horse Guards—was accustomed to administer military business; and although, on the outbreak of hostilities, his

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flict with France.

'constitutional' rival displaced him, and acceded by force of the 'standing compromise' to a real belligerent power, the 'Government' thus newly invested with warlike authority could not wield its new strength to advantage, being still, as before, unfurnished with any apt State machinery already formed for the purpose. There were then — in 1793 — only two Secretaries of State, one for Home, one for Foreign affairs. No War Department existed;* and even the actual commencement of hostilities in February 1793 was not immediately followed by changes affecting the structure of our official system; but in the following year (1794) a new office was established, and placed under a third Secretary of State, called the Secretary of State for War.† The then new office long afterwards became in a sense the nucleus of that great Department which now holds sway in Pall Mall; but the task imposed on its Chief was not at first strictly administrative, being mainly that of corresponding on behalf of the 'Government' at home with the generals handed over to its rule by force of the 'Letters of Service.'‡ The new Department was destined to

* There existed, and long had existed, the Department called the 'War Office;' but, as we have already seen, the business there mainly transacted was confined to finance and accounts. See *ante*, pp. 13, 14.

† Sometimes, as we saw, the preposition used was 'of.' The king, George III., liked apparently to regard the office as quite temporary, and called Mr Dundas 'Secretary of State for "the" War.' See extract cited in the next footnote.

‡ The king's savage tenacity of Prerogative made him apparently unwilling to do so much as even mention the new Secretaryship in writing without closely limiting its functions in the way above indi-

have cast upon it in 1801 the Colonial business of the country (then withdrawn from the Home Office where before it had been conducted), and to exist thenceforth as the 'Department of War and Col-'onies' for more than half a century—that is, till the time when we saw it at last divided in the summer of 1854.

The creation of this 'third Secretaryship' with narrowly-limited functions was not in itself such a measure as could promptly ensure great improvements of our administrative system; but the inherent mischiefs of a divided rule were partly masked, partly lessened by the twofold authority which Pitt had acquired; for whilst ruling as a great 'constitutional' Minister, supported alike by the country and by great majorities in both Houses of Parliament, he was also the sovereign's favourite, charged to 'save him from 'Mr Fox,' and for that purpose largely, though not unstintingly, trusted with the power—then very great—which the 'personal' king could exert. By this junction of a twofold power in one man, the evil of discord was averted; but it must not be supposed that the advantage thus gained made the 'two kings' quite equal to one. Pitt indeed, by his own mere authority, could well enough move the Admiralty, and those other Departments of State which belonged to what men called 'the Government,' whilst also in the name of the king he could make the Horse

cated. He asks Dundas 'to continue Secretary of State for the War—'*namely, to keep up the correspondence wherever the war is carried on.*' —Stanhope's 'Life of Pitt,' vol. ii. p. 254.

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Guards conform; but he had not, to aid him, that modern State mechanism which was imperatively needed for giving full effect to his will. If he had proposed to form such a Department as that which now in Pall Mall directs our military business, the king, it is certain enough, would have sturdily refused his assent unless he could have the new engine placed under his personal orders; and, since Pitt of course could not have yielded to such a condition, our country, thus weighed down, and hampered by its own institutions, was left to fight on as best it could without the machinery needed for effectively conducting a war.

Nor in causing all the misfortunes which directly resulted from administrative weakness, did our Polity exhaust its capacity of doing harm. It affected the choice of war measures. It affected the choice of commanders.

II.

But however defective the mechanism of our War administration, was it not somehow made to 'work' brilliantly in the great war between France and England?

How the system 'worked' during the first seventeen years of the war.

Well, certainly under the sway of their two rival 'kings,' with a military administration scattered loose in the way we have seen, and—at first—without any such a force as Europe would count amongst 'armies,'*

* When the preparations for war began at the close of 1792—and those preparations at first extended only to calling out the militia—

a valiant, wild, dare-devil generation of Englishmen carried on a war to the knife against revolutionised France, whether driven by the raging Convention, or handled by the tamer Directory, or led by the mighty Napoleon; but although—thanks to seas and strong fleets—England always escaped the worst penalties of military rashness, it is not, for that, the less true that during many a year, the stress she put on her foe by all her land-service efforts bore scarce any proportion at all to the power of the troops she employed, and rather indeed corresponded to the puniness of the official machinery which sent them into the field.

Her great naval victories, her arduous struggles maintained by small squadrons or single ships, her resulting dominion of the seas, with all its magnificent consequences, her wonderful mariner enterprises on many a shore, the ever-extending sway of her great India Company, her commerce, her riches, her vast and growing authority on the continent of Europe,* and withal, though too often wasted, the

the whole strength of our regular army was only between 17,000 and 18,000 men. Beginning hostilities with great eagerness in February 1793, our Government, down to the end of that year, was only able, it seems, to bring into the field 3000 British troops. 'Our army was 'lax in its discipline, entirely without system, and very weak in num-'bers. Each colonel of a regiment managed it according to his own 'notions, or neglected it altogether. There was no uniformity of drill 'or movement. Professional pride was rare, professional skill still more 'so.' He who thus wrote—Sir Henry Bunbury (Great War, p. vii)—was perhaps better qualified to give a decisive opinion on this subject than any other man then living.

* I do not forget the period from Wagram 1809 to 1812, but consider it would be a mistake to suppose that, because left without an ally, England did not at that time weigh on the mind of the Continent.

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splendid fighting of her soldiery—all these, the brilliant concomitants of the war she maintained against revolutionised France, might suffice to console her when failing in numbers of land-service enterprises. But fail she too often did, in that first part of the strife which lasted nearly seventeen years.*

In the kind of war which then raged, the power England had of despatching land-forces to chosen coasts was equivalent, if judiciously used, to the strength conferred by great armies; and since also, though in moderate, yet always increasing, numbers she soon had a matchless soldiery, with besides a command of vast wealth, it was scarce possible that the numberless land-service efforts she made in the seventeen years should all prove so barren as to yield no splendid exploits. But (apart from attacks against hostile colonies, of which I will afterwards speak) the 'splendid exploits,' speaking generally, were not effective achievements. Thus, for instance, Sir Ralph Abercromby's descent upon Egypt in the face of a French army, the victory he won—won even whilst mortally wounded—at the battle of Alexandria, the successful operations under Hutchinson,—these exploits, although not counterbalanced by any reverse, were followed by an agreement with the enemy which made the whole enterprise of the invasion an example of wasted power.† Thus, again, in Calabria, after

* From February 1793 to the close of the ill-fated Walcheren Expedition in the autumn of 1809. In saying 'nearly seventeen years,' I must be understood to regard the brief Peace of Amiens as a truce. It lasted about a year.

† Because the terms obtained from Menou were the same as those

winning their brilliant little victory at Maida, our people showed so strange an absence of any further purpose or wish that they almost seemed guilty of having effected their landing and delivered the battle in fun. And although the close of the period was illumined by several victories which made in some sort a beginning of the famous 'Peninsular war,' these yet belonged, all in their character, as well as by actual date, to the barren time then expiring; for Vimiera (to the rage of our people) was half undone by the Convention of Cintra;* Corunna, with all its glory, was only a feat of defence by an army which had sought to attack; the passage of the Douro was a wonder itself, yet not made to work other wonders; and if Wellesley gave adornment to the next of his enterprises by winning the two days' battle of the 27th and 28th of July, this was all he proved able to do; since, strategically, his Talavera campaign resulted in discomfiture—in discomfiture cruelly aggravated by administrative collapse.

On the whole, and considering the immense opportunities accruing to her in the course of those seventeen years, the examples that England gave of power effectively wielded by means of land-service troops were few and slight in proportion to the long, long series of 'expeditions' in which she wasted her strength.

contained in the Convention of El Arish which Kléber had signed *before* the English Invasion of Egypt. Both the agreements provided for the return of the French army to France.

* It secured for Junot's defeated army a safe return to France.

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It is plain that all this baffled enterprise was simply what might be looked for as the consequence of default in preparatives;* that default in preparatives resulted from administrative weakness; and finally, that administrative weakness, with all its dire consequences to the State and to thousands and tens of thousands of its splendid, neglected soldiery, was the perfectly natural attribute of an official machinery such as that which had long been contended for by our two disputing kings, and between them left scattered in fragments about the streets of London and Westminster.

Along with that sentiment of loyalty for a popular though untoward king, which did certainly then give to patriotism both concentration and strength, the majestic ascendant of the second Pitt was one of the causes to which England owed her decisive resolve, carrying with it great weight on the Continent; and we have almost a right to believe, that with State engines apt for his task, the great Minister would have waged war by land as well as by sea with the force that belonged to his character; but a simply instinctive power to choose the best theatre of action, to plan a campaign with wisdom, and to sustain it with vigour and skill, or even with constancy, was not one that Nature had given him; and, the machinery of our War administration remaining in the state we have seen, he nowhere could hope to find

* Amongst the 'preparatives,' I, of course, include measures for acquiring essential information. To omit that part of the preparations is to go to war blindfold.

that staff of men versed in preparing for hostile enterprises—that treasured, that registered experience, that co-ordinated knowledge, that carefully sifted 'intelligence,' that perfected collection of surveys and military plans, of 'army-states,' maps, and reports, which gathers in a sound War Department. Thus almost of necessity the basis on which he rested his warlike measures was information snatched up for the nonce, and furnished to him often by men acting either from interested motives, or under the warping effect of some eager hope or strong bias.*

From his own room in Downing Street, with an ample map spread out before him, and too often at his elbow some zealot enforcing the last new idea, he directed in this or that quarter the impacts of a far-reaching war.† To protect him from visions and visionaries, he had no wary mentors like those whose minds have been disciplined in a well-ordered War Department; and accordingly, when not either forming his great coalitions, or breaking up some league against England,‡ he was a man drawn hither and thither by numbers of sanguine advisers with

* 'My father had asked Lord Chatham to what circumstance he 'ascribed his successes in the Seven Years' War, to which the other very 'modestly replied—"To my obtaining accurate information respecting '"the places which I intended to attack." I mentioned this to Mr Pitt, 'who said, "Whatever may have been the case in my father's time, I '"found it very difficult to acquire such information."'—Lord Mahon's reminiscence; Stanhope's 'Life of Pitt,' vol. iv. p. 84.

† Wilberforce, in his 'Memoirs,' says he always used to find his friend, the great Minister, with that map spread out before him.

‡ Nelson's exploit at Copenhagen in 1801 took place after Pitt's retirement from office, but the expedition which thus culminated had been despatched by the great Minister whilst still in power.

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their souls in all parts of the world,—some full of the opening there was in the patriotism of Holland invaded; some, however, soon after resolved that, instead of defending the Dutch, it would be better, on the whole, to attack them—to attack them in Ceylon, attack them in the Banda Islands, or Surinam, or attack them at the Cape of Good Hope; some yet later reverting to Dutchmen as a people (then called 'Batavian') who ought to be invaded at home; many warranting a French Restoration with only a little help on the seabord; some, however, inviting our people to the north, and others to the west, and others, again, to the south coast of France; then some, again, eager to attack the French fishing-stations in Newfoundland far north; others savage against the French flag for displaying itself in the tropics, and pointing to the Isle of Goree; some planning a hunt against Frenchmen in the kingdom of Naples, others seeking to chase them in the States of the Church; some urging a small expedition for the alluringly mischievous purpose of cutting the dikes in Belgium; others pressing the invasion of Spanish Galicia and the seizure of Ferrol; some wanting our troops to be sent away yet further south—to land on the coast of Andalusia, and there lay hold of Cadiz; others urging that Bonaparte must be stopped in his Eastern adventure, and the French troops thrust out of Egypt; others pressing for an occupation of Swedish Pomerania, or showing that the half-hearted King of Prussia could be trusted to save himself from the fate of being devoured separately by

aiding the defence of Germany, and that therefore, to act alongside him, a strong British force should at once be sent into Hanover; and all this while, the inciters, whose policy avowedly lay in the acquisition of 'islands,' were busily importuning the Minister —some, for instance, entreating him to accept the proffered Corsica, others bent on Minorca, and others again on Malta, whilst yet others again in design transcended ocean expanses, pointing out the diminutive speck which marked Teneriffe on the charts, and maintaining that our people were for some reason bound as mariners to go out and seize the lone rock. Much more wondrous, however, than the number and variety of these counsels was the fact that every one of them had in turn such strong sway as to make Pitt give it effect:* and not now, even now, have I yet filled the curious list; for—worst of all—in those days came sons of Mammon intent upon what were then called 'Sugar Islands;' and, the grossest of the tempters prevailing, troops bitterly needed elsewhere were from time to time hurried off to die of yellow fever in the West Indies.

Such of these repeated aggressions as pointed at colonies belonging to France or the nations she drew in her wake, were a mere bringing in of the spoils which our Navy had substantially won by acquiring dominion at sea; for the task of the soldier, when employed on such service, was only, if so one may speak, to go and pick up the small whelps which the

* See in the Appendix a list (probably imperfect) of 'expeditions' showing which of them were undertaken by Pitt's administrations.

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sailor had cut off from their dams; but other attacks aiming higher were delivered in Europe against either the enemy's territories, or those he grasped as his own; and these not only, all of them, failed one after another, but failed sometimes under conditions which could scarce be remembered by generous Englishmen without a feeling like shame; for the 'bitter end' more than once showed that they had been kindling insurrections which they could not keep alive, and must leave their Royalist friends—men but yesterday their companions in arms—to the mercy of frenzied Republicans.

Of the lesser expeditions which England from time to time undertook, it may almost be said that their failure, one after another, was too often assured beforehand by the want of sufficing preparation, and this too so visibly, that they did not even serve to distract a keen-witted foe, who, well knowing the slightness of the means employed in each effort, could generally foresee its collapse.*

The second Pitt, as all know, was so far from being by nature a desultory or a volatile man that, along with the support of the nation, the dominion of the seas, and the command of vast treasure, his lofty, resolute nature, derived from an illustrious sire,

* Napoleon, at all events, was proof against distraction caused by such efforts. His penetrating intellect assured him that an expedition to the coast of France, preceded by only a few weeks of bustle at Portsmouth or Plymouth, was not an attempt deserving to be met by any serious movement of troops. His letter on this subject to Joseph, then King of Naples, is admirably instructive, and ought to be remembered by every English official who is engaged in fitting out an 'expedition.'

was what in truth made him the Titan—the baffled, yet unconquered Titan—still wildly remembered by France; yet, not having, to guide him, that oracle which rulers now commonly find in some well-ordered office of State, he fought, as it were, in the dark, or under a dim, fitful light; and seemed year after year to be wielding the land-service strength of these islands as though their happy immunity from perils then rife on the Continent had—not merely enabled, but—tempted him to trifle with the business of war. Whilst the country fought under his guidance, and indeed during several years afterwards, its utmost land-service efforts were in general so weak, so ill fitted for putting hard stress on the enemy that, apparently, until otherwise accounted for, they implied in the ruler conceiving them a want of strong sense or fixed purpose; but what thus at first sight hardly differed from a strangely persistent frivolity was rather in truth the stumbling—the inevitable, continuous stumbling—of a Minister vainly trying to conduct modern war without the light and guidance afforded by modern appliances—without, in a word, that resource of a sound War Department from which, as we saw, his country had been debarred by the always clashing exigencies of its 'personal' and its proper 'State' kings.

Whilst thus keeping our people in want of any fit warlike machinery, their 'personal king,' we shall see, could also prevent them from finding, or even trying to find, a competent general; and it was under the twofold weight of conditions thus visibly

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apt for almost ensuring miscarriage that England—eager, careless, unarmed—staggered into the great war with France.

The beginning was characteristic, and so extravagantly feeble that the gravest account of what happened has an air of caricature.

In conformity with the—quite legal, quite grotesque—doctrine that our army, like the 'perquisite' of a cook, was a thing coarsely owned by the 'personal' as distinguished from our genuine 'State' sovereign, the honour of the English arms was shamelessly entrusted to a Royal Duke who, though having, it is true, a real aptitude for giving uniformity and soundness to the structure of regiments at home, was not only conspicuous for intemperance in that madly intemperate age, but garrulous, untrustworthy, and utterly without the brain-power required for command in the field.* To strive under that sort of leadership against the far-famed Dumouriez,† some 1700 of our Guards—not one Line battalion yet ready!—were huddled into such empty colliers as could be found in the Thames; and from

* The outrage was repeated a few years afterwards by again giving the Duke of York the command of an army in the field; but Pitt's endurance of Royal pranks had by that time become less complete than in 1793, and he insisted, it seems, that H.R.H. should be under the control of a council of elders—an arrangement likely enough to avert disasters, but also to result at the best in a decent, respectable failure. The defects of H.R.H., however, were of such a kind as to unfit him for the even ostensible command of an army engaged in the field.

† A conflict between the Duke of York and Dumouriez was at first expected, but did not actually take place.

that characteristic beginning of a mighty war, on the 25th of February 1793, down to 1809, the year of the Walcheren disaster, there stretched a long series of military 'expeditions'* which so often afforded examples of wasted valour and strength, that during that period—a period of nearly seventeen years—our rudely-formed War administration, and the fruitless campaigns it prepared, may be said to have ranged in a sequence which would rather import the relation of natural 'cause and effect,' than furnish ground for maintaining that the system had 'worked' at all well.

III.

The Wellington era.

So far, therefore, the assailant of our administrative machinery is not confronted by facts which tend to impugn his conclusion; but at length, after nearly seventeen years of land-service fighting, which, however magnificent, was too often a fighting in vain, there came on a mighty change. That wild, impetuous England which in 1793 had flown at the throat of the enemy with her then utmost hundreds of men, was now in 1809 a great military Power—a Power indeed still baffled by unskilfulness and defective institutions, but not by want of troops. From superbly 'improvident' nuptials adventured in earlier

* The Walcheren expedition was the greatest that ever had sailed from these shores, and its disastrous issue is distinctly traced to the want of an efficient War Department. See Paper on this subject in the Appendix.

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years there had long been descending so rapid, so full a stream of recruits that, as always before in quality, so also at last in numbers, our army by this time was strong* — was strong enough, some have believed—if only it could be wielded with skill—to govern great issues in Europe, nay, to govern them in that very year—the year of the Wagram campaign.† Moreover, after a while, England—guided in the way we shall see—found means to conduct war more ably than in earlier years; and whoever condemns the old labyrinth of our Army administration as existing at the commencement of 1854, may receive some such challenge as the one already foreshown, and be asked to say how it was that, with that same official machinery, 'or machinery appar-

* The flush of productiveness thus resulting in a continuous stream of brave youths well disposed to enlist for the war has been traced, it is said, by Economists to small, humble, parochial causes, yet must not the less be regarded as ordained by High Destiny to give a proud nation new splendour, and sway the fortunes of Europe.

† The belief derives support from no less an authority than that of the late M. Lanfrey, the gifted historian, whose premature death is deplored by lovers of truth. He considered that by making Germany her field of conflict, England might have brought about the overthrow of Napoleon in the year 1809; and those who examine the grounds on which he based his judgment will at least pronounce them quite strong enough to secure him against charges of 'paradox.' Including her body of 80,000 militia, which was on a good warlike footing, England then had an army splendid in quality, with a strength of about 320,000, supported by between 300,000 and 400,000 volunteers, either foot or yeomanry cavalry, with besides some foreign troops in her pay; so that altogether, without counting sepoys, she had a land-service strength of about 700,000; and this, added to her insular security, to her dominion at sea, and to her command of great financial resources, made the power she wielded immense. Including her seamen, and also the sepoys, England seems to have had under arms in 1809 more than a million of men. See Paper on this subject in the Appendix.

'ently similar, she during more than two years stood 'single-handed in conflict with the mighty Napoleon, 'maintained her ascendant against him, and at 'length, when the prostrate nations of the Conti- 'nent had risen once more to their feet, took that 'signal part in delivering Europe which is almost 'sufficiently shown by uttering the mere name 'of Wellington.'

The air of argumentative cogency which such a challenge puts on is thoroughly English in character, and must not be read as indicative of any great logical strength; for, because a strong man finds means to accomplish his task, it does not of course follow certainly that the tools he made use of were good.

Even during those years—the latter years of the war—in which England was gaining a decisive ascendant, and marching towards final victory, her War administration, though improved, and improving, was still far from adequate, and only at best such a makeshift as by strong, compelling hands could be brought to answer the purpose. It was not by the excellence of her official machinery, but rather in spite of its weakness, and by resorting to other means vastly greater in power, that she really achieved her end.

However, towards answering the question, and beginning to show how it was that England after 1809 proved able to achieve what she did in the great war with France, we may first perhaps speak of the immensely long time she had spent—scarce

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less than seventeen years—in preparing and maturing her strength; for whilst flightily sending out 'expeditions' to combat on many a shore, our people were also recruiting, were drilling, were arming at home,—were trying, by such means as they knew of, to provide for continuous war; and the administrative makeshifts to which they resorted could scarce fail to prove more and more serviceable with the progress of time. Then, again, the experience gathered in the course of nearly seventeen years had of course a great worth—for incorrigible indeed must England have been, if after so lengthened a discipline she had not begun to mend; and there was one of her lessons — the one she learnt when called to arms for resistance to a foreign invasion—which especially helped to repress her strategic frivolity, and to steady her in the conduct of war.

But again—and, if well based on fact, this denial concludes the whole question — it is not true, as supposed, that after 1809, England still carried on her great war without other aid than that furnished by the weak administrative system on which she before had been leaning. Far from being left helpless after 1809, and condemned to go on still floundering in the meshes of her old institutions, she even before the year closed, began to feel the propulsion of three new administrative forces working always together in harmony, and strong enough on the whole, though using some clumsy machinery, to compass the business in hand.

Two of these three new forces she owed to her Wellington. For the third, she was partly indebted to Mr Robert Dundas, but much more to that opportune fall of gross personal monarchy which at last began to make way for government at the will of the State.

The three new administrative forces created in 1809.

If this third new administrative force did not also originate with him to whom England owed the two first, it was still for the most part wielded with a strong and increasing desire to meet the objects he indicated; and upon the whole, one may distinguish the sway which these three new forces exerted by calling it the Wellington reign.

The Wellington reign:

This reign did not last many years. Two out of the three new forces were each of such nature as to be perforce only conterminous with Wellington's campaigns. The third was one that might have been preserved to the great advantage of the country, but it was wilfully destroyed in 1816, and our system then relapsed into what it had been before the three new forces had come as yet into action. In that relapsed state our administrative system remained from 1816 to 1854; and accordingly, there was no such real likeness as the challenging question assumes between the engine of State which ministered to Wellington's enterprises and the one dragged out forty years afterwards to serve for the war against Russia.

its brief duration.

Brief duration of the three new administrative forces.

The first of the three new forces was an administrative engine established by Wellington personally at the seat of war. When England under his

The first of them:

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counsels restrained her inveterate passion for weakly-based 'Expeditions,' and resolved to fasten strongly on territories which Napoleon was minded to grasp, it followed of course that huge quantities of administrative work would have to be done in the country about to be held by our troops; and, to meet this cogent necessity, the engine we speak of was framed —an engine bearing no likeness to our quaint institutions at home, but invented for the nonce, and established in distant lands by a strong-willed, vigorous general. Thus administrative labours which under other conditions would have had to be attempted in London devolved perforce on the general in command of our army, whether toiling in Portugal, or toiling in Spain, or at last in the south of France.

And this shifting of the burthen was happily one which removed it from the shoulders of the weak to the shoulders of the strong, because, as we have seen, on the one hand, our curious old English institutions were inapt for the conduct of war; and on the other —speaking now of that time when the grave, yet romantic enterprise of the Peninsular war was definitively undertaken *—we may say that the general thus laden with what, in a sense, may be fairly called 'Government business,' was equal to his arduous task. After gathering experience in the painful school of adversity, and losing his superb soldiers

* It was not before 1810—nearly two years after Vimiera—that the definitive resolution was taken. The correspondence from which it resulted was one opened, or rather reopened, by Wellington on the 31st of January 1810.

by thousands because failing to provide for their wants, our great Wellington was becoming by practice not only an able administrator, but also—for his war-sustaining purposes—a consummate statesman; and it must be owned that he had need of his strength when thus boldly advising and personally conducting a war in which England (with only such help as she might get from the Peninsular levies and insurgents) was to pit herself singly against the mighty Napoleon, then at peace with the other great Powers.

its expiration at the close of the war.

The power thus exerted at the seat of war came of course to an end on the return of peace; and the perfected organisations by which Wellington had worked out his purposes were soon after destroyed—destroyed so completely, that not even so much as the framework of his land-transport system was left to show how in the future our armies might be moved and supplied.

The second one:

The second of the three motor forces had its origin in the same puissant will that created the first one, but was wielded in another direction, being brought to bear on the conduct of our War administration at home. If Wellington did not enter at once on the series of his brilliant campaigns, he yet did what our people seemed to like even better—that is, he conquered in battle; and the magic of victory earned him so great an authority in the councils of Ministers, that he soon proved able to guide them in the business of supporting a war. In 1811, this sway of his over the Cabinet became a decisive ascendant, so

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that much of the administrative weakness long distinguishing the rulers in England was counteracted by words coming home from their masterful general—a commander who had served them so grandly that, although now and then resistant, they every day felt more and more the wholesome weight of his power. Of necessity, at the close of the war, this second force came to an end.

its expiration at the same time.

After all that Wellington did, there could not of course but remain a huge quantity of administrative war-business that needs must be transacted at home without the great master's guidance; and how was such work to be compassed with machinery no better than that which the country had hitherto used?

Circumstances under which the creation of the third new administrative force became possible.

An approach towards improvement was opening. In times when our people looked jealously at what they conceived was a growth of the Royal authority, they had commonly had in their minds an idea of danger to Liberty, and had never apparently seen the mischiefs of a very different sort which might be expected to follow, if a 'personal king'—obstructed in some things by his rival the genuine 'State king,' whilst in others left free and rampant—should become what is unlike enough to a high-handed despot, but still in another way baneful,—that is, a Royal disturber of public business, who, although not entrusted with power to propel the State engine himself, is still able to clog, if not utterly to hamper, its action; but the experience of nearly seventeen years had been such as might teach them at last what seems in these days a plain lesson.

They had been carrying on a long war by means of two separate forces, the Navy and the Army. One of these all the time—the Navy—had lived, and toiled, and fought under a genuine 'State king,' because formed, maintained, and governed by a Public Department enjoying—through its chief, a member of the 'Government' and of the Cabinet—the acknowledged confidence of Parliament. The other force—that is, the Army—had been, altogether in theory and largely also in practice, a Royal appendage belonging to the 'personal king.' Well, the forces had been, both of them, used, and used indeed without stint, but down to the close of 1809 with these widely differing results: The 'State' force—the Navy—victorious in every great battle, and besides in fights unnumbered, had not only conquered for England a proud and happy security, but raised her to a new height of power; whilst the Army—the Royal appendage—had too often seemed only to prove that even the most brilliant fighting, if under sinister auspices, is a piteous waste of strength. And—beyond perhaps all other instances—the issue of 'Walcheren' showed how the nation might throw its strength headlong for want of so simple a guide as the set of reports labelled 'Antwerp' which, if only it had had the support of a well-ordered War Department, must there have been found complete.*

With the broadly contrasted results of 'State' government and 'personal' kingship written up thus

* See Paper on this subject in the Appendix.

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large on the wall, it was hard, I suppose, for a statesman in the autumn of 1809 to avoid seeing more or less plainly that our Army—resting less on the Palace and more on the State—should be raised up—at least part way—towards the level always held by our Navy in modern times. No such statesman could well help believing that, so far as indeed might be possible, the Department of 'War and 'Colonies' should become to our troops what the Admiralty was to our fleets, and, in order to that desired end, should have its sphere of action enlarged, receiving, to meet such new exigencies, the needful accession of strength. Twelve months earlier, any approach to so wholesome a change would have been violently opposed by the king; but under stress of disgrace, his obstinacy was now breaking down. The year I am speaking of—the year 1809—was one of dismay to upholders of 'personal' rule; and in like proportion brought hope, brought strength to the cause of the 'State.' Dragged to light at the time by a cluster of shaming discoveries, the actual contact of Royalty with military business became in one view so grotesque, in another so revolting a spectacle, that under the jeers and the frowns of an astounded country, and the guarded yet steadfast severity of an indignant House of Commons, the personal monarchy fell—fell not so mortally stricken as to be heard of no more in these realms, yet still so cast down for the moment as to be hugely reduced in its power of doing harm to the State;* and this con-

1809. The 'personal' rule of the king so discredited,

* See Paper in the Appendix respecting this 'cluster' of exposures.

dition of things made it possible for the Ministers to effect a wholesome change by enlarging somewhat their authority over the military business of the country.

that the 'State' could undertake improvement of the War administration.

Whilst acknowledged under the terms of the 'compromise' to be responsible for the conduct of the war, and therefore entitled to evoke the military resources of the nation, they, nevertheless, when providing for the actual execution of their plans, had been forced to rely a great deal on administrative labours performed by the 'personal 'king' or his servants; so that if, for example, they wished to send an invading army to any foreign shore, they indeed could themselves (through the Admiralty, which was a part of the 'Government') conduct the maritime side of the operation, and besides, though the Ordnance (in which they had some kind of footing) might send out artillery, and engineers, and provide certain stores, yet, so far as concerned the arrangements for furnishing and equipping the needed bodies of cavalry and infantry, they looked to the personal sovereign — in other words, to the Horse Guards; and accordingly, although war was raging, the 'Minister for War and Colonies' had as yet become charged with few or no great warlike tasks, except indeed the momentous one of corre-

Some perhaps have been accustomed to associate the fall of the personal monarchy of George III. with the final extinction of his mental health; but that last blow did not come upon him until late in 1810, whereas the 'Mrs Clarke' scandal (which drove the Duke of York from the Horse Guards) was before Parliament in the early part of 1809.

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sponding with each of the generals in command of our armies abroad.

Dundas's measure;

But, the king no longer obstructing, men now got to see that this Minister might make himself the organ of the Government for authoritatively impressing its will upon the numerous scattered offices which, between them, however imperfectly, were performing the varied functions of a military administration; and that, if this assumption of power could be supported by proper appliances for giving it full effect, a great advance would be made. Under these conditions, Mr Robert Dundas contrived an expedient which, considering that on behalf of our country — then without one ally*—he was preparing war—war to the knife — against Napoleon at the height of his power, may seem rather slight, rather simple, yet it happily produced good results.† He determined to find, if he could, some able young officer who would act as Under-Secretary in the compound Department, devoting himself exclusively to its military, as dis-

creating the third of 'the three 'new ad- 'minis- 'trative 'forces.'

* The overture to Colonel Bunbury was made in October 1809; and, Austria having by that time met her fate at Wagram, England (with her Spanish and Portuguese levies) was thenceforth alone against Napoleon, and continued to be so until even *after* the invasion of Russia had begun in 1812.

† The arrangement under which Dundas became Minister of 'Colonies and War' did not last, but it was during the brief period of his holding the office that he initiated the appointment mentioned in the text. His successor (Lord Liverpool) gave effect to the selection, and under him, and his successor (Lord Bathurst), Colonel Bunbury continued to act as the Military Under-Secretary of the Department until the close of the war. Being connected with the Whigs by relationship and marriage, the Colonel expressly stipulated and caused it to be stated in writing that the office should be regarded as one quite apart from the field of politics, and strictly confined to 'War' business.

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tinguished from its Colonial business; and happily, the very man needed was then within reach, having newly come home on leave. Scarce more than thirty years old, Colonel Bunbury had not only been acting for some years as Quartermaster-General in the field, but in that capacity, and indeed as chief officer of the Staff—for no Adjutant-General was present—had been so fortunate as to be able to take an effective, nay, commanding, part in the brilliant little action of Maida, and had since been engaged in field-service more harassing than battles, but also better fitted to practise him in the everyday business of war. He had studied his profession with care; and having intellect, energy, cultivation, and excellent sense, with, moreover, the fame of his victory at Maida, and a station in life which gave him independence and strength, he brought, on the whole, great advantages to the task awaiting his care; and it resulted that England, after having waged war at random for a period of nearly seventeen years, made shift at last, under his management, to have a State engine performing—not all, but—some part of the work which System—where System exists—would cast on a real War Department.

Colonel Bunbury.

His office in some respects made to serve as a War Department.

With the means of action afforded them by this new official machinery, the Government carried on their war business throughout all the years—the five or six critical years—which yet had to pass before the second fall of Napoleon, and achieved the task, if imperfectly, yet at least without hampering Wel-

The business of War administration thus, however, imperfectly compassed.

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lington in his steady career of victory by any quite fatal defaults.

Means by which England brought the war to a glorious end.

After passing through their seventeen years of more or less wild 'Expeditions,' and then entering upon the grander career laid open to them by their 'three new administrative forces,' our people still worked on and on, till at length the time came when —foremost of all the allies—an English commander was able to undertake the invasion of France with what he believed to be the 'finest army that man 'ever led.'* England rose, as we saw, to this pitch of military greatness by the use of aids and contrivances which, because never forming a part of her permanently established administration, may be rightly called 'adventitious' or otherwise 'make-'shift resources;' and accordingly, a sailor might say of her at the close of the war that she came into port under jury-masts; but she came in nevertheless —or rather so much the more—with a radiant glory surrounding her, and carried besides such a treasure of warlike experience as she never before had earned in all her old years of strife. To try to remember a little the art of fence learnt in so long, so mighty a war, and to hoard the experience gathered—this,

Value of the experience she had gained;

* It was after having crossed the Pyrenees, and whilst still conducting his campaign in the south of France, that the Duke of Wellington declared this belief to Colonel Bunbury, who had come out on behalf of the Government at home to confer with the illustrious general. It would be interesting and—I should imagine—instructive to know much more of what passed at such a time between the Duke and the representative of the home Government; but I believe that, upon this subject, Sir Henry Bunbury was accustomed to maintain a very careful reserve.

all see, was what prudence—the simplest prudence—enjoined; and there is nothing more plain than that, whilst of course making haste to effect that extensive disarmament which was warranted by the return of peace, statesmen ought to have cherished and perfected the inexpensive machinery of a sound War Department, entrusting to it the management of all such military business as might still be on foot, taking care to keep it practised and skilled in those administrative operations upon which troops depend for health, for life, for movement, for discipline, for skill—in one word, for power—and finally making it serve as the great treasure-house of the kingdom in respect of the knowledge required for preparing and sustaining war.

and of the inchoate War Department which had ministered to Wellington's armies.

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The very opposite of all this was done. On the compound Department of State which, in one of its coupled offices, had long administered war, and of late years with splendid results, there fell a maiming hand. Because peace had returned, the Letters of Service expired; and then, coming out of abeyance, the old Royal claim to have personal command of the army regained its baneful force. For the reimposition of palace authority unsparing destruction made way. With the king's reigning son for their ringleader, and a too servile 'Government' abetting him, the strange generation of Englishmen who had

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dared and achieved giant enterprises against the might of Napoleon were now in a humour for making riotous bonfires of their warlike machinery. Either careless of the future, or simply blind to the danger of being—even administratively—without fit war-engines in peace-time, they made haste to destroy that establishment created by Mr Dundas, which, although called an 'under-secretaryship,' had been compensating, however imperfectly, for the want of a real War Department. They thus, at a blow, dismantled the branch of Lord Bathurst's office which had concerned itself with military administration, and dismantled it too without meaning to replace the abolished establishment by any other State engine appointed to do the like work.* Despoiled thus of its only machinery for ministering to the national forces, and relieved of course by the peace from any belligerent duties, the compound 'Department of War 'and Colonies' thenceforward ceased to be busied in labour connected with arms, and—undergoing no

1816. The third of the three war administrative forces wilfully destroyed.

* The last memorable act of Colonel—then Sir Henry—Bunbury's official life was not administrative, and I should therefore be accusing myself of irrelevancy if I were to mention it in the text, but I may speak of it here. It was he—a painful mission in which Lord Keith was associated with him,—it was he who, on board the Bellerophon, had to speak words of doom—St Helena!—to the fallen Napoleon.

The Government, to do them justice, were fully appreciative of Sir Henry Bunbury's services, and, indeed, they seem to have judged him capable of performing any kind of State duty; for they not only offered to give him (with the same official status as before) the charge of the Colonial business, but subsequently proposed to appoint him Ambassador to the Porte. I must take this opportunity of confessing the great advantage I have derived from the thoroughly trustworthy writings of Sir Henry Bunbury, and also from the very interesting Memoir of him by his son, the present Sir Charles.

change in the thirty-eight years that followed—remained all that time what we found it on the eve of the conflict with Russia,—that is, an Office devoted to superintendence of Colonies, and not only uncharged with the task, but unsupplied with the means of carrying on military administration; yet prospectively clothed with a right to conduct, or try to conduct, the business of any new war which the future might have in store.

The effect of this act of destruction.

The Crown could furnish no substitute for what it destroyed; and our country thus left to fare on without any engine of State equivalent to a real War Department, was thenceforth kept under conditions which exposed it to the risk of cruel misfortunes when engaging in any new war.

Cause of the destruction.

If this havoc, as some have imagined, had resulted from motives of economy, it would have matched the wildest sample of retrenchment that any spendthrift ever afforded in his moments of tremulous penitence; but already we have seen full enough to prevent our throwing the blame of these Royal and official misfeasances on the always ready shoulders of 'the House of Commons;' for, to know the curious terms of what I called the 'partition' effected in times long past, is to learn that the act of destruction followed naturally, followed even inevitably—unless the Crown should give way—from the terms of the 'standing compromise' between the 'personal' and the genuine 'State' king. In conformity with that understanding, the war had been carried on by the 'State'—that is, by 'Government'

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chiefs whom the 'Letters of Service' called always 'his Majesty's Ministers'—men enjoying the confidence of Parliament, and to Parliament directly responsible; but, when peace returned, the old Royal claim was unhappily suffered to refasten itself on the country, and at once to break up that machinery of the 'Wellington reign' which, although far enough, it is true, from even approaching perfection, had still been made to work serviceably during several victorious years, and (by being made to receive unceasing yet judicious improvements) might well have become in time a magnificent engine of State. From this cause it was that the 'Department of War and Colonies' became stripped of its power over the military transactions of the country, and that England—speaking administratively—fell back at once into a plight such as that in which she had found herself some twenty-three years before, when despatching all the troops she could muster on board the Newcastle colliers.

The pettiness of the advantage secured by the Crown at the cost of grievous harm to the country.

And, although the Royal demands caused this lasting injury to the State, all the good they secured to the Crown was so small, so poor in comparison to the public mischief they wrought, that—if he knew what he was doing—the moral plight of the Regent when thus harming England was like that of the man without malice, who only set fire to a homestead because, for some small cooking purpose, he chanced to want some hot ashes. The courtiers surrounding their prince might eagerly wish him joy, saying that at last, upon the expiration of Wellington's Letters

of Service, their Royal master's land forces were once more under his personal governance; but, since all men were then well agreed that the mighty business of war was one that must be always committed to 'his Majesty's Ministers,' and not to the 'personal' king, there was something not far from ignoble—something not even safe against ridicule—in the claim of the 'personal' sovereign, or the son representing him, to resume the command of 'his' army; for he did not, and could not, do this until the fighting was done, and then only resume with full knowledge that, whenever the moment might come for again resorting to arms, he again must give up his authority over every body of troops under orders to take the field. Like a child, he might handle the sword, but only whilst in its scabbard. Yet, in order to keep such a plaything in Royal hands, the Regent and his servants, between them, brought about that dismantling of our War Department which was fitted—and, as now we know, destined—to prepare for the State grievous ills. They could say indeed, with strict truth, that the rule of the 'personal' sovereign had always been meant to revive as soon as the war should cease; that the Crown, in reclaiming its perquisite, was acting both legally and in conformity with the long-standing compromise; and that, consequently, in abetting the resumption, however injurious to the State, our Ministers were only conceding the exact 'pound of flesh' which the Regent was entitled to have. But apart from the spectacle of public men helping Shylock to enforce such a bond

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as that against a trustful, generous nation, it is plain that the whole character and quality of the transaction was governed by the length of the interval during which a protracted war had kept the Royal claim in abeyance; for the principles of constitutional rule had been more or less cogently swaying the direction and management of England's military resources during a period of nearly a quarter of a century; so that after those years of comparative exemption from the 'personal' incubus — years equalling each a whole decade of common times—to go laying once more on her shoulders the old, encumbering yoke was—not to be merely continuing a preposterous system, but—rather to inflict a new injury on the State by old and long-disused means.

Blame justly attaching upon the Prince Regent and the Ministers.

The guilt of the Regent was simply that of a man who sacrificed the welfare of his country on the gross, reeking altar of Self; and his Ministers must be condemned for subserviency, because they stood by unresisting, and even abetting, whilst a Royal claim long in abeyance was not only used to take from them their long-held authority in military concerns, but to dismantle and leave unreplaced a State institution which was then, as now, strictly essential to the safety and welfare of the State.

It is hard to see how the Regent and his Ministers could have anywhere found an excuse for thus agreeing between them to cripple, to mutilate England. They knew, though inertly, that in even their times —times rude by comparison with ours—the strife of nations was no longer a work so free from com-

plexity that the preparations for maintaining it could be prudently left to the moment when a rupture is going to take place, and that a people which dispenses with a sound War Department in peace-time must needs be without one when war breaks out, and even, indeed, till long afterwards, since, far from being an engine that can be wrought into a sudden efficiency upon the spur of the moment, this is one, on the contrary, that can only be constructed and made to work with full power by the labour of years upon years. They had, therefore, before them full proof that a Department admitted by all to be essential for the conduct of war is also essential in peace-time, and can hardly have been able to fend off the truth from their minds by maintaining a sheer unbelief; but between unbelief and belief so consciously felt that it needs must burst into action, man often enough finds a ledge on which he can keep his footing—and it is there that a defender of the Regent and his Ministers may show them, perhaps, to have stood; for, when executing the work of destruction, they seem to have acted like functionaries transacting some business, of course, and were not apparently stayed for even a moment's reflection by any warning voice. Far from saying 'Beware!' to the Government, its parliamentary opponents were approvers of the havoc they witnessed, and even indeed strove their best to give it a yet wider range.*

* See the debates on Tierney's motion in 1816 and 1817 for the *total* abolition of the 'Office of War and Colonies.'

V.

Long-protracted continuance of the crippling polity.

The expedient of dividing the control of our army between the sovereign and the sovereign's Government continued to work its effects upon our military administration throughout the term of the Regency, throughout the two reigns that followed; and even after that time, during many a year, there was no abatement of the evil, no cessation of its original cause: but it must be borne in mind that, before our quarrel with Russia, and indeed until several years afterwards, the idea of constituting a War Department upon sound principles had not passed through that long ordeal of discussion which is commonly required in England for the ripening of great public questions; and the Queen's loyal subjects have now a fair warrant for saying that if (after having been mastered and duly adjudged by our statesmen) the subject had come up for Royal decision in the earlier years of her reign, she would have graciously consented to remove the one obstacle which, till lately, prevented her country from having a sound War Department.*

* I base this loyal surmise as to what the Crown would have done upon knowledge of what the Crown did, when, in later years, firmly advised. The Royal concessions were made by degrees, and indeed there are remnants of 'personal' government which even now mar the symmetry of our War administration; for it is the Field-Marshal commanding in chief, and not the Secretary of State, who still takes the Queen's pleasure upon the appointment of officers; and I may add, that the Judge-Advocate (who, however, is a member of the 'Government') still in person submits to the sovereign transactions within his department. These are blemishes of a serious kind, because their

England then might have entered upon her war against Russia with institutions apt for the task, and no longer deformed by a rivalry between the State and the Court.

Result of the enquiry.

So, then, now we have plainly discerned that 'the 'three new administrative forces' which made our great captain's work possible did not any of them act on events till the autumn of 1809; that they none of them lasted beyond the year 1816; and that thus belonging exclusively to a well-defined interval, they formed no part of the mechanism by which England managed war-business at any other times. Their

tendency is to be almost inviting mistake, if not, indeed, causing relapse, by keeping 'substance' and 'form' in a state of incessant contradiction; but despite the two blots thus left staring, there is no present room for doubting that the great constitutional change to which I refer has substantially taken effect. It has now been declared that the Secretary of State for War is not only answerable to Parliament for the conduct of all army business, whether executed by the Horse Guards (now brought into the same range of building) or by any other branch of the War Office, but is also armed with the power which such a burthen implies; so that—merely to give one example—he can insist that the grant of every commission, though still passing through the Horse Guards, shall be in conformity with his will. This happy conclusion of troubles which long had hampered the State was hardly attained in its fulness until the year 1872, when the requisite orders in Council which followed the Act of 1870 had come into due operation, and, indeed, within recent times, an almost opposite kind of solution was apparently judged to be endurable by our patient country. It is actually true that Mr Sidney Herbert's patent as Secretary of State for War contained a provision excluding him—that is, excluding the State!—from the right of making army appointments. The gracious Royal consent giving sanction a few years afterwards to the welcome change we have hailed, was an Act superbly contrasting with the general tenor of 'personal' sovereignty as wielded in other days; was a victory achieved over Self by the genuine State Queen; was, beyond all comparing, the greatest feat of her reign, and may well be remembered with gratitude—remembered even in times when all the cant praises shall cease, and praises in earnest begin.

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splendid sway over her fortunes was not a continuance but—on the contrary—an interruption of the methods which she normally used; and, to speak of her accustomed system as one recommended for public confidence by the glories of the 'Wellington 'reign' would be hardly a less flat perversion than insisting on Cromwell's ascendant in Europe as a ground for trusting the Stuarts. Far from leaning on mere Palace wisdom, it was during the happy abeyance of 'personal' sovereignty brought about in 1809, that England, then once more a 'State' ranging free from the 'untoward King George,' and finding a commander in Wellington, proved able to break the spell which, since the great days of Chatham, had palsied her land-service strength.*

Thus, to answer with yet more exactness the question at the head of this chapter:—the forces 'made 'to work brilliantly in what have been called the 'great days' were—not the ancient bits of machinery brought out by our people for use when entering upon their new war with Russia, but—expedients contrived in 1809, which, before the end of the year next succeeding the fall of Napoleon, had, all of them, ceased to exist.

* With respect to the ill effect of 'personal' government upon the fortunes of our army in war, the lessons of modern history are decisive. See, for instance, if exploring the time between 1760 and 1801, how well the vapours and mists that gather in the minds of the English are dispelled by the volumes of Massey. Without having apparently meant to aim at such a deduction, he yet, by the sheer stress of facts grouping lucidly under his pen, has forced careful readers to see that, in the period with which he deals, the meddling of the 'personal' king and the long eclipse of our arms were simply cause and effect.

CHAPTER V.

THE WAY IN WHICH FRANCE AND ENGLAND MINISTERED TO THEIR ARMIES IN THE EAST.

I.

Conditions under which the supply of the Allied armies proceeded.

EVEN for the strongly-manned and highly-trained Intendance of the French, but yet more so of course for the small Commissariat body which England had found means to collect, the task of supplying French and English troops on the Chersonese was one not only great in mere bulk, but exacted under difficult and shifting conditions, — conditions which, besides being new to begin with, were from time to time displaced—and that somewhat rapidly—by conditions newer still.

The phases of the Eastern campaign in their bearing upon the question of supply.

To say nothing of our English stepping-stone—Malta—the Allied armies—sent out at first with a quasi-diplomatic intent — were established on the territories of an ally—the shores of the Dardanelles, and the Bosphorus — without there confronting an enemy. Next, having been moved to Bulgaria (where an enemy lay within reach) they prepared to undertake regular operations in the field by striving to collect with all speed the requisite means of land-

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transport.* Next, transported by sea to the Crimea, and there landing without opposition, they seemed to have the inchoate dominion of a country abounding in food for man and beast and means of land-carriage. But next—intent on Sebastopol—they abandoned for the moment their inchoate dominion by converting themselves into a 'movable column,' and committed their very existence during a period of some thirty hours to the governing fortune of war. Next, by their victory on the Alma they converted their inchoate dominion of the country into unresisted possession, and for a moment it seemed that the task of thenceforth supplying the armies had been happily lightened. But this period of commissariat tranquillity was not suffered to last five days; for by their flank march, commenced on the 25th, the Allies abandoned their conquest of almost all the Crimea, and by descending the Mackenzie Heights—heights too formidable, as they afterwards judged, to be prudently assailed from the south—made the step they were taking irrevocable. Next—intent on their siege—they suffered themselves to be compassed about, and imprisoned upon what we have called their pittance of utterly barren ground; and then it became evident that—at least for some time—the life of the troops must depend altogether upon what might be brought them by sea. But another and even more trying change yet awaited the

* When the orders came out which suddenly shifted the theatre of war from Bulgaria to the Crimea, Mr Filder had already collected 5000 beasts of transport.

anxious providers; for in November, when bleak winds and chill rains were already sweeping over the Chersonese, it was determined that, where the armies were, there they must be prepared to lie for months, and that the French Intendance and the English Commissariat must meet as best they might the huge accession of wants that would needs be created by striving to keep troops alive on the top of the Chersonese Heights throughout a Crim-Tartary winter.

This last exigency, so far as we know, remained long unforeseen, remained even unimagined beforehand by any of the thousands and thousands who were straining their gaze to descry what the future might have in store.*

II.

For the purpose of ministering to their armies in the East, France and England alike chose substantially the same general plan. Trusting mainly to their own stores at home not only for articles of equipment

The general plan of the ar-

* Mr Filder, the Commissary-General, was apparently the first to hazard a conjecture in this direction. When he saw the Allies marching as a 'movable column' and suffering the Cossacks to ride round them, he sagaciously inferred that a policy which aimed waywardly at Sebastopol, and neglected to keep a hold over any broad part of the province in which Sebastopol stood, might lead to what afterwards happened—that is, to want in the midst of abundance—to the want of hay and forage-corn which, though plentiful in the country generally, were renounced, as it were, by the Allies when they determined to rest content with Balaclava and the barren Chersonese. In his letter of the 22d September 1854 he imparted this apprehension to the Treasury.

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and all implements and munitions of war, but also for flour, for corn, for biscuit, for coffee, wine, spirits, salt meat, they sent out all these things by sea to the shores of the Bosphorus, there established magazines and hospitals, and thus constituted for their armies a secondary base of operations less remote from the theatre of war than the south coasts of France and England.

Arrangements by which France and England at first undertook to supply their armies in the East.

For the means of land-transport, for fresh meat, for vegetables, for forage, for timber, if needed, and fuel, they of course trusted mainly at first (as belligerents almost always must do) to the resources of the countries occupied by their armies or some of the neighbouring provinces; but when the Allied armies suffered themselves to become penned up in the way we have seen upon a small, barren corner of ground, there was cast upon their providers the new, anxious task of supplying them by sea with every manner of thing that they needed, however bulky and cumbersome,—so that, when disembarked with great labour from many a ship, the freights would not only include huge parks of artillery, and accumulated munitions of war, but, moreover crowd acres and acres and acres with draught and pack horses and mules, with dromedaries, with waggons and carts, with herds and flocks awaiting slaughter, with pyramids of grain and flour sacks, with mounds of vegetables, with ricks of hay and straw, with hillocks of charcoal for fuel, with numberless stacks of timber.

Change of measures to which they were subsequently driven.

III.

To accomplish so much, and do at once for the armies what commerce—with the practice of centuries—finds means to do for a city, it was not only requisite that those portions of the needed supplies which were not already in store should be promptly obtained, but that numberless vessels should be sailing and steaming from England, from France, from Algeria; that some of these should be depositing their cargoes on the shores of the Bosphorus, others going straight on to the seat of war; that, again, other vessels should be plying between the Bosphorus or Bulgaria and the Crimea; and that yet other vessels from the shores of Turkish provinces and of neutral states should be carrying their freights to the Bosphorus, to Balaclava, to the ports of Kamiesh and Kazatch. But there prevailed in those days an idea that it must be easy enough to set in motion this familiar kind of industry, however extensively needed; for people imagined that the Governments of the Western States, being masters at sea, and unstinted in their money expenditure, could at once obtain all the supplies, and all the means of sea-transport they needed by appealing, purse in hand, to traders and shipowners—men assumed to be ever in readiness for the performance of any lucrative contract. The error lay in supposing that the promptitude with which a brisk man may go and buy a single bullock or charter a single brig can be

The magnitude of their task

Undue reliance upon the resources afforded by commerce.

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attained in great transactions. A contractor may have the means of delivering within some specified period great herds and flocks ready for slaughter, and a merchant may own fleets of vessels which he wishes to keep employed in what he calls 'the 'carrying trade;' but when challenged to deal with a customer whose wants are on any large scale, the contractor and the shipowner alike will be found apt to say they must have time. And time, of course, is just that which Governments conducting the business of war may be least able to spare; for the lives of the soldiers and the fate of military operations may be hanging upon despatch.

Difficulty of promptly acquiring by purchase all the needed supplies.

Distressing experience proved that a Government buying things for an army from traders at home may not only have to wait, but in spite of all the money it offers, to go on waiting and waiting during a painfully lengthened period. See, for instance, the fate of an order to provide for our army in the Crimea one simple article of commerce. Few trades, one would think, are less complicated, and more easily susceptible of rapid expansion than the ancient trade of the tent-maker, the trade of the apostle St Paul; yet (including the time passed in transmission) it took five months to supply our troops on the Chersonese with any new tents at all, and seven months even elapsed before they received the whole number of 3000 tents demanded in the month of November.*

* I have before me a curious correspondence on this subject between two of the Westminster offices, from which it seems to result that there was no special mishap, or default, or neglect, and that practically, in the

If commerce was thus slow in London, the greatest mart of the world, much more might it be expected to baffle the Commissary-General when labouring to effect purchases of those supplies—such as horses, bullocks, sheep, vegetables, hay—which he sought to draw from the Levant: and in truth his task there bristled always with difficulties; for despite the contrivances used for binding men down by hope of gain and fear of loss, the signature at the foot of a contract in that part of Europe and Asia was too often far, very far, from ensuring its punctual fulfilment.*

It is true (as was shown well enough when the expedition set sail), that the Governments of France and England could promptly acquire or charter a number of merchant-vessels with certainly a very large aggregate of carrying power; but if the supply was great, the need proved greater still, and it soon became plain that the whole mercantile shipping of England and France, and of all the neutral countries besides, was insufficient to meet at short notice the growing exigencies of the campaign; so that for long periods together, there were troops, munitions, and stores of all kinds collected for shipment to the East, yet detained at the opposite extremity of Europe for want of vessels to carry them. As regards the hire

Insufficiency of merchant-vessels, and more especially of steamers.

judgment of the Ordnance authorities, the execution of the order could not have been accelerated!

* Contracts for the supply of an army in the field are so apt to be broken, that the Commissary-General no doubt knew he must be prepared for such contingencies (see Sir Randolph Routh's 'Observations on Commissariat Service,' p. 24); and he seems to have always aimed at keeping up margins sufficient to prevent his being straitened by such defaults.

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of Levantine vessels, the insufficiency of the supply increased rapidly with the approach and advance of winter; for after the close of the fair autumn weather, the crews (who were often part owners) became always less and less willing to face the storms of the Black Sea. Want of steamers was more especially felt. With respect to all those bodies of troops and supplies which had remained collected and stored on the Bosphorus or in Bulgaria, there were needed of course fresh means of sea-transport for bringing them over the Euxine to their ultimate destination in the Crimea, and it was inevitable that every such 'break 'of gauge' should occasion delay; but—on the Bosphorus at least, if not also at Varna—there were other and longer detentions, resulting, one may say, from confusion, which for many a day proved insuperable; for—compared with the means of transhipping them, which the able and indefatigable Admiral Boxer could at the instant provide, the freights coming up from the Marmora were overwhelming in quantity. Upon the whole, although England and France, having the absolute command of the sea, had found means to send out their armies to the distant Crimea, and proved able to keep them there planted until they extorted a peace, it still did not turn out to be true that, with all the shipping they had, and all the shipping they hired, they could absolutely and at once throw a faultless bridge over the thousands of miles of salt water which divided them from the seat of war, still less that for vegetables or herds of cattle obtained in the Levant they could find the

Confusion in the Bosphorus.

The flow of supplies to the seat of war not at once and completely effected.

steam-transport they needed for bringing such supplies into use. CHAP. V.

No State power, no personal carefulness sufficed to ensure a rapid transit of goods from England or France to their armies. In October, when the Prince Consort saw that our army was likely to winter on the heights before Sebastopol, he conceived the graceful idea of sending out to his brother officers of the Grenadier Guards a supply of fur coats; but what happened was that this warm clothing, though promptly despatched, did not reach the Grenadiers till the spring of the following year, when already a warmth as of summer had made it almost disagreeable to look at such hot things as furs.*

For want of means to land or tranship goods which had reached their destined ports, they too often remained on board during lengthened periods;† and apparently it now and then happened that a vessel left the port she had reached without having completely discharged her cargo, yet continued to go on plying, so that stores and munitions long moved to and fro on the waters. In one ghastly instance, the body of an Irish officer, despatched for interment at home, was somehow 'mislaid,' like the Prince Consort's furs; and apparently it must have voyaged, like a troubled spirit, from shore to shore, for the utmost labour of official investigators proved absolutely unable to trace it.‡

* The Prince Consort himself stated this to an English traveller high in my confidence.

† The sums paid for 'demurrage' were very great.

‡ I have before me the official correspondence on this mournful

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Insufficiency of the steam-power, in its bearing upon the supply of fresh meat and vegetables.

The insufficiency of the steam-vessels at the command of the English proved baneful to the health of our troops by curtailing their supplies of fresh meat and vegetables. For the transport of such things by sea experience forbade all reliance upon the slow, uncertain resource afforded by sailing-vessels; and indeed it was found that, when committed to the winds of the Black Sea, beasts perished during the voyage in numbers rightly called 'enormous.'* Accordingly, whilst the Commissary-General laboured hard and successfully to purchase cattle and vegetables in the countries of the Levant, he was also incessantly striving to obtain for their transport the requisite amount of steam-power. Unable to obtain all he needed, he yet strove to obtain all he could, and for this purpose addressed to the chief a standing request for all the steam-vessels that from time to time could be spared;† so that it became the painful duty of Lord Raglan to apportion the insufficient steam-power between competing exigencies, determining as best he could whether this want or that—the want, for instance, of ammunition, or the want of fresh meat—should be the one that—at least for a time—must needs remain unsatisfied.

subject. It was only after a lengthened correspondence that Lord Raglan said the matter must drop.

* Mr Filder's address to the Chelsea Board, Rep., p. 360. Even during the autumn period—October and the early days of November—when beasts were sent by sailing-vessels, they perished in the proportion of more than one-third.—Ibid.

† Ibid.

IV.

The latter stages of supply:

Of the things required for the armies, with, moreover, the vessels for carrying them, a great part might have been sooner or later obtained; and notwithstanding all chances at sea, notwithstanding all Bosphorus troubles, might have come at last into port, or reached the offing in safety; but there still would remain the task of landing them, of disposing them in magazines, or drawing them up to the camp, and then also the task of distributing them and bringing them into due use. For carrying the process through all those latter stages, the French were happily circumstanced. Their harbours—Kamiesh and Kazatch—no less than the adjacent landing-grounds, were so ample, so convenient, that with the abundance of workmen they had at command, there was nothing to hinder their disembarkations; and again, from their ports to their camp, roads traversed at most points with ease, and well 'metalled' (when the need was once recognised) by a ready sufficiency of 'hands,' completed the lines of communication between France and her besieging army;* whilst the powerful body of officers and men which was called, as we saw, the Intendance, stood ready to form magazines, to bring up the needed supplies by sufficing means of land-transport, and distribute them at last

as effected by the French:

* Guns and waggons ascending from the French ports to their camp had at first to climb some rather steep ground, but passed thenceforth over open downs where, by deviating from the accustomed track, a soft bit of road could be easily exchanged for a better one.

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in the camp. The regiments, as we have seen, had their own bakers with them; and it well might be taken for granted that, until wounded or stricken by sickness, the French soldier would use his known skill and resource in making the very best of his too meagre ration, and his wretched means of shelter.

by the English.

To our people, on the other hand, the advantages thus enjoyed by the French were all of them unhappily wanting. They had no sufficing harbour. The iron-bound coast in their rear forbade all contact with the shipping, except through the basin of Balaclava, and this inlet was so extremely diminutive that it constituted a sorry port of supply for the vast and pressing needs of an army.

Extreme narrowness of the communication through Balaclava.

'None,' said the Quartermaster-General, 'except 'those who witnessed our efforts in the autumn and 'early winter of 1854, can form an adequate conception of the difficulty with which the vast and bulky 'supplies and warlike stores requisite for maintaining 'the army and carrying on the siege were got into a 'small inlet of the sea, and landed and stored in the 'narrow little fishing-place of Balaclava. There was 'a gallant army on the hill, and a great nation 3000 'miles off, sparing no expense to supply it, but narrow indeed at this point was the channel of communication between them.'* It was — not the camel alone, but with him also—the rich man bringing whole mountain-ranges of cargo that strove, and strove, and strove to pass through the eye of the needle.

* 'Address,' p. 196.

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To facilitate the landing of cargoes, our Engineers, in spite of the difficulties occasioned by a distressing scarcity of 'hands,' found means to construct some wharves — wharves slight at first and infirm, but reconstructed in November, and so far extended as to have a frontage of seventy-five feet. Still, from the insufficiency of the miniature harbour, from the narrowness of the Balaclava ledge, and, finally, from the ever-embarassing want of 'hands,' it resulted that an accumulation of supplies lay for weeks and weeks on board vessels—vessels, some of them in harbour already, others kept in the roadstead outside for want of berth-room within.*

Construction of wharves at Balaclava.

Causes, nevertheless, obstructing the disembarkations.

Another link in the chain was the one—eight or nine miles long—which connected our troops on the Chersonese with Balaclava their port of supply; and the question whether a road well hardened with stone ought not to have been made for the purpose, is one demanding an answer.

Roadway between camp and port.

Question of 'metalling' a road before the 17th October.

The first part of this answer applies to a period of three weeks determining on the 17th of October, and blends itself with the counsels which prepared the cannonade of that day.

After having made good their 'flank march,' the Allies had safe ground for inferring that, at a sacrifice of men which Burgoyne himself did not estimate at more than about five hundred, they at once could lay hold of Sebastopol;† but Science stepped in

* The sums our Government had to pay for 'demurrage' were very large.

† To understand the defenceless state of the place, see vol. iii. chap. x. sect. 6 *et seq.* Lord Raglan in person had caught Prince

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representing that such a loss, even though small, was one that ought to be spared; because, she said, in less than three weeks * she could carry the place in an easier, smoother way, breaking down its resistance at once by means of a strong cannonade delivered with heavy siege-guns.

In support of the other grave reasons against lapsing into any such plan, stress might well have been laid upon the prospect of those broken communications with which, in the winter-time, our troops might have to be struggling, if Science by any mishap should fail to bring them into Sebastopol before the close of October. Quite rightly (as of course we now know) might objectors have said to Burgoyne: 'When you ask us to respite Sebastopol during all 'the time you require for preparing your designed 'cannonade, are you right in making so sure that 'your measure will attain its result in the middle of 'October? And if by any mischance we should be 'so far disappointed as to find ourselves still on the 'Chersonese when wintry weather sets in, think what 'will be the plight of an army unprovided for such 'a trial, and what will be our troubles and dangers 'in connection with the business of transport, if we 'should have to bring up our waggons over this clay

Mentschikoff's army in the very act of deserting Sebastopol; and he saw, to use his own expression, that by the sudden march of the Allies to the 'South Side,' the garrison had been 'completely taken 'aback.'

* The days actually consumed in making ready to try the experiment of the cannonade were no less than twenty-one; but at first, the Engineers did not think that their preparations would take quite so much time.

'track by the Col which, although indeed now dry CHAP. V.
'and firm, will evidently after great rains become
'almost a morass!'

If objectors thus pressing their argument had had the ascendant in council, they indeed would have saved the Allies from calamities and troubles unnumbered, but not, it is plain, by causing any road to be made. On the contrary, their foresight would have transcended all matter of discussion about the roads, for they would have reopened the whole question of respiting Sebastopol, and forced their hearers instead to seize the place at once, thereby winning (with the coveted prize) a direct and unbroken communication between the quay at Portsmouth and our troops in the heart of Sebastopol.

Whilst himself inclined to the measure of attacking the fortress at once, Lord Raglan promptly discovered that he could not make his own wish prevail against Science allied with the French; and thereupon—avoiding dispute—he fell loyally into the plan of undertaking a cannonade with siege-guns.* But before adopting the measure, he apparently became well assured that, although not so easy and simple as the one his own judgment approved, it still would achieve the fall of Sebastopol before the close of October;† and accordingly, the expecta-

* See *ante*, vol. iii. chap. xi.

† For unless he had become so assured, it is hardly imaginable that—at all events, without a great struggle—he would have consented to exchange the opportunity of at once breaking into Sebastopol for a prospect so wretched as that of being planted before it indefinitely, with a knowledge that the autumn, however sunny and fine, was the season that must be followed by winter.

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tion thus formed became one of the motive forces which governed his course of action. That this prospect was falsified by the subsequent march of events we long ago saw; but in council, at the time I am speaking of, the dictation of Science prevailed; and, her guidance having once been accepted, men, of course, had to act in accordance with the common resolve. What, under that aspect, was the duty of the English commander when considering how his troops on the Chersonese must receive their supplies from Balaclava? The then state of the roads was this: a waggon-track passing over dry clay, and for the time both firm and compact, led up from Balaclava by way of the Col to that farm-house on the Chersonese which became Lord Raglan's headquarters, and thence on by various branches to other parts of the wold, including those about to be occupied by our divisional camps. It was evident that, being 'unmetalled,' this clay road might be so broken up by heavy and long-continued rains as to become impassable for wheeled carriages; but the weather, at the time I am speaking of, was in a settled state; and from what had been learned of the climate, there seemed to be ground for trusting—and the expectation proved sound—that no change of such kind as to imperil the communication would take place until the end of October—a time when the two Allied armies (if Science was not misleading them) would already be housed in Sebastopol.

And then also there was another resource; for by moving a waggon-train northward from Balaclava

over a distance of a couple of miles, it could be made to strike the Woronzoff Road—a well-designed, well-'metalled' causeway passing up across those very ridges on the Chersonese Heights which were to be occupied by our divisional camps. Thus, supposing Lord Raglan assured that Science would make good her promise, he had at command all the roadway he could well have deemed needful; for whilst rightly entitled to trust that the road by the Col would not be broken up by great rains before the October day when already (if Science spoke true) his troops were to be in Sebastopol, he had also good ground for believing that he could keep as a second resource his control of the Woronzoff Road. Under such conditions, would it have been warrantable for Lord Raglan to insist that he needs must construct a 'metalled' road leading all the way up from Balaclava to the ridges in front of Sebastopol? He had no supply of the tools indispensable for such a purpose; * and unless—drawing back from the combative work undertaken—he were to employ a large proportion of his troops in breaking and laying the stones required for some eight miles of carriage-way, he could not find 'hands' in his army for the compassing of any such task.† Nor again did it lie in his power to obtain human labour by hire;‡ and,

* Road-making tools did not (like spades, pick-axes, &c.) form part of the equipment of the army, and accordingly, there were none with our troops.—Evidence of Sir John Burgoyne before Sebastopol Committee, Questions 17,226-227. For proofs that the men for the purpose could not be found, see *post*, and the notes.

† For proof of this, *post*, and notes.

‡ So also for proof of this.

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upon the whole, it is plain that, to insist on making the road in derogation of a military project then supposed to require but three weeks for its thorough maturity, would have been to secede from the enterprise.

Far from taking any such course, Lord Raglan not only entered upon the business of this quasi-siege, and upon the duty of covering it at the most imperilled point, but engaged his strength so unsparingly in those heavy tasks, that (after also providing for the defence of Balaclava) he was destined ere long to find himself with hardly men enough left for even the usual camp duties.

He thus ventured to engage his whole strength, although neither receiving nor expecting any other than small reinforcements;* but his eagerness to take part in striking the concerted blow with all the might he could command had the warrant of cogent motives. For the fortress before him was not only that coveted prize, that object of the campaign, and indeed, one may say, of the war, on which England had steadfastly set her heart, but was also the haven—the only haven outside the grave—in which he could hope to find for his troops a little rest from suffering, a little rest from toil.†

Thus—and not for weak reasons—Lord Raglan's whole army stood committed to siege or field duties;

* General Canrobert, on the contrary, was receiving and expecting very large reinforcements.

† With respect to Lord Raglan's sense of the dire need there was for trying to secure repose for his troops, see the impressive words he wrote on the 23d October, *post*, p. 158.

and having now besides ascertained that he could not obtain by hire the labour required, we are peremptorily forced to conclude that, down to the moment when the prospects of the Allies were overcast on the 17th of October, he was never so circumstanced that he ought to have tried to construct a stone-laid road between Balaclava and the camp.*

Question of 'metalling' a road after the 17th of October.

But when the disappointing experience of the 17th of October had proved that the fall of Sebastopol would not take place on that day, and perhaps might not even be near, ought Lord Raglan to have still delayed trying to strengthen the clay-bedded waggon-way between his port and his camps? Might he not have withdrawn for a time from his duties as a quasi-besieger, and set a competent part of his army to the task of making a road?

This could not be done, and so we shall presently see.

The attack of the 17th of October appeared at the time to have failed for that particular day owing mainly to what, in a sense, might be called a mere accident—that is, the unlucky explosion of a French magazine; and the project, far from being abandoned, was only deferred—deferred at first to the morrow,

* So far, after lengthened inquiry, the most hostile critics of Lord Raglan were apparently disposed to agree, see 'Times,' 12th February 1855. It was on the question of making a road *after* the 17th October that controversy more persistently lasted.

The 'moment' above referred to is the one when Sir Hugh Rose came to Lord Raglan with the first message from Canrobert.—See *ante*, vol. iii. chap. xvii.

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then deferred for two days, and then indeed for the longer period extending over nearly a fortnight, but still only put off for a purpose well defined by the French; and it resulted that during the interval, Lord Raglan was ceaselessly kept under the same obligations as before — obligations which not only bound him to carry on his part of the siege-work with all possible vigour, but also to hold his army in readiness for executing an assault on the place whenever the French should report that their measures were ripe for the enterprise; so that, during the whole of that period, the small English army was engaged to the utmost of its power in fulfilling plans of attack concerted with General Canrobert.

And soon a new exigency began to press hard on the Allies; for the enemy had been lately receiving great accessions of strength, and on the morning of the 25th of October, we saw him take the offensive. From that day until one o'clock on the 5th of November, the Allies were under a peremptory challenge, delivered by a largely outnumbering army with settled purpose to crush them; and during the critical period thus occupying nearly twelve days, there was not and could not have been any thought of having roads made by those too scanty English troops which were performing the enormous task of not only besieging one half of Sebastopol, but also defending Balaclava, and also, again, defending their Inkerman Heights against the enemy's assembled hosts.

Although resulting in victory, the Inkerman morning brought with it so great a disclosure of the

enemy's numerical strength that, far from lifting off a huge weight from the minds of the Allied generals, it quickened their sense of the need—the painful need — that there was for preparing resistance to largely superior numbers, and thus doubled the cogency of the motives under which they held fast to their 'siege,' with all its burthensome toils; because this—like the sword that will thrust, yet can also 'parry' and 'guard'—was not only pointing still to the work of attack, but, moreover, now effectively serving to defend the Chersonese Heights.*

Thus the ceaseless perseverance of our army in its quasi-siege duties was always essential—was essential from the first, as a part of concerted attacks on Sebastopol, and also after the third week in October for the then superadded exigencies of defence.

At no time, accordingly, unless relieved by other troops, could any material part of our army be withdrawn from the siege-work for even so momentous an object as that of constructing a road; and to attempt such a change under the eyes of a vigilant enemy, would have been to call down utter ruin, not only upon the French thus deserted, as it were, in the battle-field, but also upon the seceders themselves.†

However, the Inkerman day marked a crisis in-

* With respect to the efficacy of the siege-works as means of *defence*, see *post*, p. 117, and the footnote there printed.

† Upon this question, the testimony of Sir John Burgoyne is authoritative; and he gave it very decisively, showing that to recede from the siege efforts would have been to enable the enemy to advance and send his round-shot and shell even into the English camp.—Before Sebastopol Committee, Questions 17,230 to 17,237.

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Lord Raglan's measures with respect to the road by the Col.

viting the Allies to form new resolves. And Lord Raglan was now under strong motives for looking with increased anxiety to the state of his communications; for whilst now at last robbed of the hope that Sebastopol would speedily fall, he knew that the days were approaching when heavy rains might be expected to break up the clay road by the Col; and moreover, he remembered too well that acquiescence in the occupation of ground laid hold of by General Liprandi on the 25th of October had deprived him of the second resource afforded by the Woronzoff Road.

So on the very morrow of the council which fastened the Allies to the Chersonese, Lord Raglan began his measures for converting the road by the Col into a 'metalled' highway. His first step was to despatch an officer of the Quartermaster-General's department to Sebastopol, with orders to buy there the tools, including, of course, the stone hammers, which were needed for this kind of work; and six or seven days later (though the tools had not reached Balaclava), the making of the road was commenced by removing the layer of mud which encumbered the old waggon-track by digging wide drains on each side of it, and finally, by collecting the stones which were to be afterwards broken up and converted into the requisite 'metal.' Four hundred Turks were employed upon this task, and it made fair progress during the few fine days which succeeded to the storm of the 14th; but the torrents of rain which afterwards fell, and the sickness and deaths that ensued, proved de-

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Vain efforts made to 'metal' it.

structive to every hope of promptly completing the work without the help of many more hands. Of the 400 Turks who at first had been employed, only 150 could now be collected, and even these were in too feeble a state to be capable of anything like a full day's work. No hired labour worth having could be obtained at this season. The Commissary-General, it is true, was able to hire workmen on the shores of the Euxine and the Bosphorus, and he accordingly imported them by hundreds; but they died by fifties, and the duty of burying them deep enough to prevent their bodies from tainting the air, became an additional task hardly counterpoised by any good service that the feeble survivors could render. Without stopping short in the siege-work upon which he had entered, or ceasing, as though in despair, to show a due front to the enemy, Lord Raglan could afford no sufficient number of hands for the construction of the road.* Yet the task was one of vital import, and

* 'It was not in my power at any time since the troops ascended this 'ridge, worked as they have been from the first, to employ them in 'constructing a road.'—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, Jan. 6, 1855. His despatch of the 3d March 1855, was to the same effect. All three of the tribunals which adjudicated upon this question confirmed the statement that our troops could not have been employed for the purpose. Without professing in terms to give its own opinion, the Sebastopol Committee reports: 'Sir J. Burgoyne, the chief engineer 'officer on the staff, and other military authorities, state that the soldiers 'could not be withdrawn from the trenches for the repair of the road.'—Rep., p. 14. The Commissioners, Sir John M'Neill and Colonel Tulloch, were not indisposed to be critical of the military authorities; but upon the subject of the road, they fairly reported thus: 'The officers com- 'manding divisions who were examined upon the subject are unanimous 'in their opinion that it would have been *impossible* to employ a suffi- 'cient number of men to make the road, and at the same time to carry

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one, too, of some magnitude, for the road altogether was eight or nine miles long, and the lower stage of it passed over soft alluvial ground where no supply of stones could be obtained without fetching them by hand from spots at least half a mile off, and sometimes even yet more distant.* Of course under such conditions, the work made small progress; and yet the time had now come when the need of a completed road was imperatively urgent, for torrents of rain were converting the old carriage-track into a quagmire of tenacious clay. In this grievous conjuncture what ought to have been the course taken by an English commander?

Vital importance of having a 'metalled' road.

Question as to how the peril occasioned by the breaking up of the road should have been met.

Already the strength of our soldiery and their Turkish auxiliaries was being tasked to the utmost of what the human frame could endure; and, this truth being once acknowledged, it becomes, of course, necessary to discard all idea of suggesting that the labour of completing the road should have been super-

'on the military operations in which the army was engaged.'—Rep., p. 18. The Chelsea Commissioners quote the whole of the above passage and corroborate it by words of their own.—Rep., p. 14. The Sebastopol Committee threw out a suggestion that hired labour might have been obtained; but this idea, after a great deal of inquiry, was negatived by Sir John M'Neill and Colonel Tulloch, who reported that 'hired labour could not be obtained.'—Rep., p. 33. The Chelsea Commissioners quote that decision, and proceed to use it as a part of the ground on which they base their report.—Rep., p. 14. These conclusive decisions rendered it comparatively unimportant to inquire as to the responsibility of any particular department for the state of the road; but nevertheless in the Appendix I have introduced a note on this subject.

* Sir John Burgoyne, speaking roughly, computed that the construction of the road would be more than 1000 men could compass in two or three months.—Sebastopol Committee, Question 17,225.

added to all the other labours then exhausting the power of our men;* but it does not, I own, at all follow that the critic must rest content with the non-completion of the road as an evil that was really inevitable. Far from making any such concession, he may fix upon some chosen part of the duty at that time entrusted to our soldiery, as, for instance, upon work in the trenches, and maintain that the toil there expended might have been better and more wisely applied to the business of completing that essential, that vitally essential, road upon which the supply of the army was depending. And supposing that the work in the trenches had really had no other use or purpose than that of advancing the siege, this criticism would indeed have been just; but the actual truth is that the siege-works, though aggressive in their original purpose, were now beyond measure precious as means to be used for defence;† whilst besides, the apparent perseverance of the Allies in their siege was the best of all possible expedients for masking their weakness, and so perhaps warding off a second Inkerman onslaught.

Under that altered aspect of the question, it begins to seem clear that for even so momentous an object as that of constructing the needed road, Lord Raglan would not have been warranted in receding from his position as an active and apparently earnest besieger.

* See footnote, *ante*, p. 113.

† That our siege-works effectually deterred the enemy from attacking the ridges they occupied, is proved by the tenor of the Russian counsels when preparing for Inkerman. See *ante*, vol. v. chap. ii. sect. 3; and see *ante*, p. 113, and footnote.

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Yet without so receding, he could not spare men for the road.

Still, again and again there stands forward the irrepressible truth that this business of the road was one of life and death to many of our soldiery, if not indeed to the army; and upon the whole, my conclusion is that it would have been right for Lord Raglan to force his way out of the meshes by a peremptory appeal to the French. For after all, the true policy of the Allies, when broadly surveyed, coincided with the dictates of justice; and what justice demanded was that the selection of those works which were to be from time to time carried on by the two armies respectively should be made by the two commanders in concert, with, moreover, a clear understanding that the labour exacted from the whole Allied soldiery should be fairly divided between the French and the English in proportion to their respective numbers. General Canrobert, under such an arrangement, might either have enabled our people to undertake the repair of the road themselves by supplying their place in the trenches, or else might have got the work done by men drawn from his 'Corps of Observation,' or by other troops under his orders; but in one way or other, if Lord Raglan had strongly appealed to him, he could hardly have helped taking care that the communication between our port and our camp should be made good. For the need of it was too clear to bear discussion, and a great part of the duty at this time engaging the French was of such a kind that they

might well have postponed it—postponed it, that is, for an object which was of vital moment to their English allies, and therefore, rightly judged, to themselves.* CHAP. V.

To find the line of duty which Canrobert ought to have followed when dealing with such an appeal, one need only for a moment consider how a single generalissimo must have deemed himself bound to act if commanding the two Allied armies. Such a chief would have surely determined that his red troops must not suffer and die for want of that help and relief which his men in blue coats might have furnished.

The conditions were such, that to favour one army at the expense of the other was indeed to wrong one of them, but also to endanger both. In the presence of a powerful, outnumbering enemy, and cooped down with their backs to the sea, the two Allied armies were each of them of absolute necessity to one another, having, neither of them, any pretensions to be able to remain alive singly. French and English alike, they had adventured on board the same ship; and it would have been an almost mad kind of favouritism to go and protest that because the planks stoved in were those on her starboard quarters, therefore none

* Bosquet's troops on the Chersonese were of great value to the Allies because (as Inkerman showed) they constituted a reserve force which might be moved with powerful effect to other parts of the field; but the *primary* duties assigned to them were not by our people regarded as having much importance. They seemed to waste their power in fortifying and guarding the very ground which least required such an expenditure of military energy.

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of the port-side men must help to save the vessel from sinking.

Still, as bearing against my conclusion, and in favour of the policy of endurance, though coupled with suffering and the loss of precious lives, it should be remembered that, for the delicate task of determining what the French general could be prudently urged to do, Lord Raglan was more competent than any other then living man; that (apart from what I have treated as a plan of necessity) the mere justice of the English demand would have formed no excuse for pushing it to dangerous lengths; and finally, that any catastrophe to which the Allies might be doomed would be miserably explained by ascribing it to dissensions between the two generals.

The road between port and camp becoming almost impassable.

The road growing worse and worse daily under the action of rain, was before long in such a condition as to be impassable for waggons, unless they were forced through the clay by powerful teams; and a time was even at hand when the Commissary-General would find himself compelled to abandon altogether the use of wheeled carriages, trusting only thenceforth to the expedient of sending up his supplies on the backs of horses and mules. This change would at once reduce the transport power of each beast to a third of what it had been when applied to the draught of a waggon; and yet, far from having been tripled to meet a thus tripled necessity, the number and strength of our baggage horses and mules in the Crimea will be found growing every day less until brought, in mid-winter, so low as to be almost on the

The means of land-transport declining.

verge of extinction. Already cold, wet, and hard work (to be followed at times and too often by a more or less prolonged want of food) were not only killing those beasts, but fast weakening our artillery teams; and, there being every day from these causes a need of more transport-power, we shall see Mr Filder prevented from importing the fresh horses and mules, of which he had numbers in readiness, because he knew that, if they were landed, he had not the means of feeding them.*

Want of forage.

By reason of the woes it occasioned, this want of forage unhappily was not a trivial circumstance; and one of the two distinct causes to which it has been traced was obstruction encountered in England.

In almost all Turkish provinces (with some barley, besides, for horses) the forage mainly used was chopped straw—a kind of food so unwieldy, so bulky in proportion to its weight and nutritive power, so

* This was doubted by the Treasury; but Lord Raglan's private correspondence with the Duke of Newcastle seems to dispel all uncertainty. On the 18th November Lord Raglan writes: 'Mr Filder's 'great fear is the want of forage for the horses.' On the 28th: 'Our 'horses are dying fast, but until we are sure that we can feed them, I 'would not recommend any addition here;' 'our artillery horses are 'suffering much from exposure and hard work, as well as want of food.' January 23, 1855: 'I did not, after the storm, attempt to get fresh 'horses, for the Commissary-General did not encourage me to hope that 'he could feed them, and there was no use in buying horses and letting 'them die of starvation and want of due care. I got some from Eupatoria for the Commissariat, and they, like the snow, have melted away; 'and I now have sent for some to Constantinople, but they may share 'the same fate if the forage which should have been sent from England 'does not arrive.' January 29th: 'Mr Filder complains sadly of the 'non-arrival of the supplies of hay which he was led to expect he 'should receive from England periodically.'

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difficult to embark and to stow on board, so difficult to land and to carry, that experience soon proved it ill fitted for the supply of an army dependent upon transport by sea;* and, the Levantine contracts for forage resulting too often in failure, Mr Filder not only saw, but saw before the landing began, that to assure the sustenance of our cavalry and artillery horses and beasts of transport in the Crimea, his safest and best course would be to form a reserve by drawing pressed hay from England.†

Recourse to England for hay.

Accordingly, on the 13th of September, he addressed to his chiefs in Whitehall the official application for hay which will be presently stated; and from time to time afterwards, he enforced and extended his request for this kind of forage by despatches and

* The exceeding scantiness of the 'hands' that could be obtained made it specially difficult to land such a thing as chopped straw. There were times when, from this cause, the famishing beasts were prevented from getting the chopped straw which lay on board ship in the harbour.

† A vessel of 600 tons measurement can only have, besides her ballast, 50 tons of *un*pressed hay stowed on board her, whilst of *pressed* hay she could carry, it seems, 120 tons. The supply of forage was a matter so vital to our army, that the mere question of cost became reduced to insignificance; but one may mention—for the fact seems curious—that the plan of resorting to England for pressed hay proved not only much more sure and practicable, but even cheaper than importing chopped straw from Constantinople or the ports of the Black Sea.—Rep. Seb. Committee, Question 13,756. The cost of supplying English hay to our army in the Crimea was about £20—viz.:

Cost of ton of hay, . . .	£5	0	0
Preparing, packing, carriage, . .	2	13	4
Freight to the Crimea, . . .	12	0	0
Sea-risks and demurrage, . .	0	6	8
	£20	0	0

—Chelsea Rep., p. 545.

letters sent home on the 22d of September, the 8th and 23d of October, the 8th, 13th, 18th, and 27th of November, and, finally, on the 8th of December. These despatches and letters reached England;* but then England, as we have seen, was the one excepted country in which Mr Filder's power of drawing supplies might encounter official resistence; because, when there seeking to operate, he addressed himself (through its Secretary) to the Treasury Board—that is, to his official chiefs—chiefs entitled to question his acts, and to expect from him the language of deference. Accordingly, from on board ship, the day before the landing began, the Commissary-General addressed to the Treasury his official despatch of the 13th of September, and these were the words he used :—

Obstructions there encountered.

'BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, 13*th September* 1854.

'SIR,—Referring to my letter of the [blank], I 'have the honour to report for the information of the 'Lords Commissioners of her Majesty's Treasury, 'that the contractors having failed to provide the 'quantity of hay therein adverted to of proper 'quality, and under the uncertainty of being able 'to procure in this country a sufficient supply of 'forage for the great number of animals belonging 'to the two Allied armies, I have the honour to 'suggest that 2000 tons of hay be forwarded to 'Constantinople during the course of the autumn. '—I have the honour, &c.,

'WILLIAM FILDER.'

* The important despatch of the 13th September was received at the Treasury on the 30th.

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Thus, we see, the request was conveyed in the form of a respectful submission to the judgment of official superiors; and, on the other hand, the conscientious, painstaking Treasury Board considered that —because not expressed in the language of 'request,' and only in that of 'suggestion'— the appeal was one that ought to undergo the ordeal of their own judgment. They therefore proceeded to weigh the question of sending out the 2000 tons as one which Mr Filder had only raised, not as one he had meant to determine.*

Bringing to bear on this question keen intelligence, indefatigable energy, and a lively — a too lively — sense of their duty as public servants, the Treasury Board, as may well be imagined, was slow to believe it possible, that when the Allied armies had victoriously laid their grasp on a province abounding in flocks and herds, in corn and hay and firewood, they—without having met with a reverse — would deliberately give up their rich prize to the exclusive use of the enemy, and appeal to their distant homes in France and England for not only all other and less bulky supplies, but even for such a product as hay. It is indeed very true, as we have seen, that the incredulity of the Board was falsified by the event, and that the armies really did

* In justification of this conclusion, they say: 'In ordinary official 'language, a *suggestion* rather than a *request* that any act may be done 'implies that it is subject to modification, and that it is to be acted 'upon according to the best judgment that can be formed by the person 'to whom it is addressed.'—Treasury Memorandum and Explanation, p. 22.

go and put themselves in such a predicament as to become absolutely dependent for everything upon vessels coming over the seas; but none could well imagine beforehand that so strange an anomaly would take place. Again, the Treasury saw that, however precise in its terms, the despatch of the 13th September was not keenly, not anxiously worded; and besides, the Board thought that several cargoes of hay which, although countermanded, had still been sent out in August, would substantially meet by anticipation a part of Mr Filder's demand.*

Upon the whole, it will perhaps be conceded that, if the Treasury on the 30th of September had been considering whether it should originate the expedient of sending out to the Crimea large quantities of hay, there were reasons abundant and good for declining to take the step; but between the idea of abstaining from the initiation of such a measure and that of venturing to resist the appeal of the Commissary-General, there lay of course a great gulf.

As a circumstance which perhaps may be thought to have warranted a pause of some days, it should be understood that in point of comparative acquaintance

* Treasury Memorandum, p. 23. The arrangements for shipping these 457 tons of hay had gone so far that (despite Mr Filder's countermand) the Treasury thought fit to let the business proceed; and their resolve was a fortunate one, for the arrival of the hay in October proved exceedingly opportune. The Treasury 'believed' (ibid.) that on the 13th of September, Mr Filder did not know of the resolve which had caused this supply to be on its way out; and supposing their impression to have been right, they were entitled to consider that the arrival of the hay not expected would be equivalent to a first instalment of the 2000 tons demanded.

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with the progress of the campaign, the Treasury when receiving the despatch was ahead of Mr Filder when writing it by seven eventful days. For on the 13th of September, the Allied armies were hovering indeed on the shores of the Crimea but still on board ship, and to the Commissary-General, then penning his missive, the even immediate future was of necessity dim; whereas on the 30th, when the Treasury received the despatch, they well knew that the invaders had prosperously effected their landing, and that the Crimea was rich in forage; but, moreover, they already had heard what, the same day, was proved to be true—that is, that the battle of the Alma had been fought and won—an event great in other respects but also at first sight appearing to ensure a command of those products in which the country abounded.*

Upon the whole, the Treasury Board determined to wait for the arrival of the next mail before passing into action. On the 9th of October, however, they received Mr Filder's letter of the 22d of September —the second day after the Alma—a letter announcing that hay and forage-corn abounded in the Crimea, and that the Tartar population were well disposed, but adding that supplies could not be made available to any extent because the Cossack cavalry closed upon the rear of the army as fast as it advanced.

With these data before them, and governed by the

* Tidings of 'the Alma' were spreading over London during the morning of the 30th, and Lord Raglan's telegraphic despatch announcing the victory was received in the course of the day.

considerations already indicated, the Treasury Board at once took their course. On the 10th of October they wrote to Mr Filder, apprising him that it 'would 'depend on his subsequent reports whether steps 'should be taken to send out the hay mentioned 'in the letter of the 13th of September;' but at the same time they gave instructions for the despatch of one full shipload with as little delay as possible.* Until the 7th of November they took no further step; and owing partly to their deliberate pauses but much more to the lengthened periods of time spent in finding and loading the vessels, it not only resulted that the whole month of October passed away before the first cargo went off, but that even down to the end of November, the quantity of hay despatched from our shores 'during the course of 'the autumn' had reached to only 270, instead of 2000 tons.†

Moved afterwards by further appeals and warnings from Mr Filder, they, on the 7th and 28th of November, requested the Admiralty to send out yet further and greater though still insufficient supplies;‡ but

* The vessel that sailed in compliance with this urgent appeal of the 9th of October did not leave our shores till the 8th of November; so that, the 'pause' of the Treasury having lasted ten days, the time it took to charter a vessel and load her was far greater—extending to more than a month.

† Seb. Comm., 4th Rep., p. 349. Of the 270 tons (called more accurately by the Treasury 168 tons) the Belgravia carried 180 (called by the Treasury 179), the Esk 48, and the Helen 42 tons.

‡ The quantity that the Treasury requested the Admiralty to ship off in the course of December was 633 tons; and this added to the 270 tons despatched in November would make only 903 tons; but if the 457 tons sent out in August were reckoned as an instalment 'by antici-

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before their commands could be obeyed by even beginning the despatch of those further quantities of hay, the autumn was destined to end, and the Commissary-General would soon have to learn that, although he made his application on the 13th of September 1854, he must not only pass through October and November, but also through the dreaded December, and even through the January of the following year without having up to that time received more than what one may call a ninth part of the 2000 tons demanded.*

The Commissariat was destined to be withdrawn

'pation' of the 2000 demanded, the deficiency would be reduced to 640 tons. Mr Filder, however, in the meantime had been augmenting his demands, informing the Treasury frankly that he must rely *wholly* upon England for hay (letters of 8th and 23d October), and that his estimated consumption of hay for three months was 9,000,000 lb.—*i.e.*, 3078 tons, or 1026 per month—a quantity largely in excess of all the December shipments (despatch of 13th November), so that under that aspect there would be a renewed deficiency at the time when the cargoes shipped in December should reach the Crimea. However, so far as concerns the period of the hardest trial—*i.e*, the months of December and January, the instant evil was—not the insufficiency of the December cargoes (which did not reach the Crimea before February)—but the non-arrival of *any* English hay (whether sent in the 'autumn' or later) except the 228 tons above mentioned.

* The quantity he received before February 1855 on account of the 2000 tons demanded on the 13th of September 1854 was only 228 tons (Chelsea Board Rep., p. 366.) These 228 tons formed part of the 270 tons despatched in the course of the 'autumn'—*i.e.*, in November. The Belgravia having sailed on the 8th of November, and made a very quick passage, arrived at Balaclava with her 180 tons on the 30th of the same month; and the Esk, too, coming in some time afterwards with her 48 tons, brought up the quantity received before February 1855 to the above amount of 228 tons. At the end of January 1855 the Helen with her 42 tons was still to come, and so also were all those vessels which were to have been freighted in the course of December with their 633 tons.

from the rule of the Treasury on the 22d of December and annexed to the War Department; but it seems that this structural change did not operate with any great force upon the business of despatching hay from England, for the quantity shipped in January was only 357 tons, and in February 651 tons.*

The motive powers of mind and temperament that led the Treasury to act as it did were exceeding diligence, exceeding thoughtfulness, exceeding anxiety, exceeding zeal for the public service; and it is probable that the very opposite qualities would have led to a better result. If an idle, self-indulgent official had been in charge at the Treasury on the 30th of September, he would hardly have suffered the despatch then received to trouble him for so much as five minutes. Far from entering upon the delicate and perilous venture of interposing the power of the department obstructively between our army and its appointed provider, he would have accepted Mr Filder's decision at once without sitting down to review it. Upon a corner of the paper, turned down, he would have written a few words directing compliance with the terms of the despatch, and might then

* Chelsea Rep., p. 587. In March, after the change of Government, the shipments made during the month sprang up with a wonderful bound (as though under the effect of Palmerston's volition) to nearly 1700 tons (1698 tons).—Ibid., p. 588. And in every month thenceforth until the close of February 1856 the shipments were great, amounting in that same February to no less than 6,330,592 lb.—*i.e.*, 2326 tons.—Ibid.

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have gone off to his amusements with the consciousness of having done what was safe.*

An idler thus disposing of the question would have done what was easy and simple, but also, I must think, what was right; for the despatch of hay, even if destined to prove altogether superfluous, would have been, at the worst, a small evil; whilst the withholding of such a supply, if eventually turning out to be needed, might bring about unnumbered troubles. It is hard to see why Mr Filder, when desiring to obtain stores from England, should not have been there left unfettered, as he always was if making purchases in other parts of the world; and, besides, for a reason—by philosophers called 'antecedent'—which might well have been treated as worthy to supersede special conjectures, there could not but lie a grave danger in venturing to baffle the plans of a Commissariat officer who not only stood charged with the task of keeping an army supplied, but was labouring all the while in a region so remote from his chiefs in Whitehall that he could not exchange ideas with them in less than several weeks.

Still, it is after the event that we come to such a conclusion; and in justice to upright public servants, one ought to try to imagine how men would have judged, if the Allies had not happened to take the almost inconceivable course of abandoning the farm-produce of the whole Crimea to a defeated enemy.

* 'Send copy to Admiralty with letter requesting that Mr Filder's 'suggestion be acted upon with the utmost possible despatch. Minute 'accordingly.' A few such words as that would have been a sufficient instruction to the clerks.

One ought to form some conception of the jeers that in that case would have been showered upon any Treasury potentate who had met the appeal of the Commissary-General by instant and liberal compliance—who, whilst having the 'Gazette' of the 30th still damp on the table before him, had made haste to employ public treasure in sending out hay by long voyages to an army he then knew to be victorious—an army he then knew to be surrounded by pastures and meadow-lands, by farmsteads, and a well-disposed peasantry, by granaries and stacks of good forage.

The want of the hay thus withheld became a misfortune when coupled with the loss of hay caused by the storm; but of course that conjunction of evils was not one that any foresaw; and accordingly, it would be wrong to imagine that on the 13th of September and in the course of the eight following weeks, Mr Filder was asking for hay which he represented to be surely and absolutely needful, or that the Treasury ever thought for an instant of resisting any such prayer. What Mr Filder during these eight weeks desired, was to secure, by his appeals to the Treasury, a supply of hay which, when added to his accumulations of forage obtained from other sources, would give him a surplus in readiness to meet any unforeseen exigencies; and it was only from the effect of the subsequent loss inflicted by the storm of November that the want of the margin he had sought to provide became a real, present calamity.

The hand which transacted the business in question was that of Sir Charles Trevelyan, the Assistant-

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Secretary; but, since he, after all, was only a subordinate officer, we ought to see who presided over that great department of State which thus fenced, if so one may speak, with Mr Filder's demands. The Department was ostensibly governed by a board of public servants called 'The Lords of the Treasury;' and again, this Board was controlled by its two chief members—namely, the 'First Lord,' and the Chancellor of the Exchequer; who accordingly, if so they had chosen, might have watched and carefully guided the operations of Sir Charles Trevelyan. They did not so watch or so guide him; but before exclaiming too loudly against Lord Aberdeen and Mr Gladstone for neglecting to exert their authority, the critic must in fairness remind himself that the sub-department by sufferance had acquired a sort of inchoate autonomy, and that it was not the habit of the Treasury to keep Commissariat matters under the actual, personal supervision or cognisance of either the First Lord, or his colleague the Chancellor of the Exchequer.*

Constitution of the Treasury.

And again we ought to remember that the Duke of Newcastle (then clothed with a power which would

The incidence of blame.

* When Pitt—the second Pitt—was First Lord of the Treasury, he used certainly to watch, and even in no stinted measure to transact its Commissariat business. I believe that the Duke of Wellington, when First Lord of the Treasury, used to take all his office functions *au sérieux*—used to come down early, hang up his greatcoat and his hat, and then travel all round the great table from packet to packet till he had mastered, or thought he had mastered, every one of the decisions which were submitted by subordinate functionaries for the sanction of the 'Board;' but I also understand that this proceeding on the part of the Duke was regarded in the office as a rather eccentric piece of supererogation.

have virtually enabled him to put compulsion on the Treasury) omitted to take any steps for enforcing prompt compliance with Mr Filder's demands for pressed hay, and may therefore be said to have erred in not using that paramount authority as War Minister which his colleagues had substantially conceded to him.* Still it would have been evidently harsh to hold the Duke supremely in fault, if his error was only that of not governing another department ostensibly coequal with his own; and upon the whole, we perhaps may acknowledge that the dispersion of our war-waging offices ought, in justice, to involve, more or less, a corresponding dispersion of blame.†

* The steps taken by the Treasury were from time to time imparted to the Duke; and he might have insisted at once that, instead of the fencing, there should be absolute and prompt compliance with Mr Filder's wishes. Of Mr Filder's appeals for pressed hay, and of the non-compliance with them, Lord Raglan was continually reminding the Duke, as *e.g.*, in his letters of Nov. 18, Nov. 28, Jan. 23, Jan. 29, and despatches of Jan. 22, Jan. 25, Jan. 30.

† An additional, and surely most cogent reason for condemning the dispersion of official authority.

CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF THE ALLIED ARMIES BEFORE THE HURRICANE.

I.

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The food of the French army.

THE army of General Canrobert was often, though not always, able to provide itself with good leaven bread, and to this there were added small allowances of rice, coffee, sugar, and salt; but, as regards meat, the soldiery were poorly fed: so that, upon the whole, their rations were hardly sufficient to support a good strong state of health in men doing much hard work, even under a temperate climate, still less to fit them for bearing the hardships of this winter campaign. * On the other hand, the French soldier was in most cases one who had been always accustomed to rely upon bread as the staple of his daily food; and in the art of making the best of any meat or vegetables within his reach, he always had immense skill.

* 'The French receive meat only once in three days, and then only 'the half of a French pound. Occasionally they only receive it the 'fourth day.'—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 20th January 1855. See, however, in the Appendix, detailed statements respecting the French soldier's ration. In later years (1870-71), the insufficiency of the French soldier's ration was admitted, and an augmentation took place.

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The food provided for the English army.

Considering what our troops were destined to suffer in the now fast-approaching winter, it seems right to impart a full knowledge of the means provided for their subsistence, and even to do this with completeness by descending into homely details.

The food of the English army was a subject of anxious and ceaseless care to its chief. The 'Queen's 'Regulations' directed the Commissariat Department to furnish each soldier serving abroad with either a pound and a half of leaven bread, or one pound of biscuit, and one pound of fresh or salt meat; * but at that point the accustomed obligations of the Commissariat ceased, and all the other articles of food which the soldier might require were left to be provided for him at his own expense, through the mechanism of regimental arrangements. Lord Raglan, however, perceived that this last part of the accustomed plan was inapplicable to an army in thinly populated countries having little or no retail commerce; and when our troops began to advance in front of Varna, he directed the Commissariat to supply daily to each soldier as part of his ordinary ration, one ounce of coffee, and one ounce and three quarters of sugar. †

* The stoppage of pay for this supply of bread and meat was 3½d.

† For this addition to the ration there was to be an additional stoppage of 1d., so that for his bread or biscuit, his meat, his coffee, and his sugar, the soldier would be charged altogether 4½d. The change, although sanctioned by a 'Board' assembled for the consideration of the subject, was one that could not be made strictly lawful without obtaining the consent of the Treasury; but Lord Raglan, in the interest of the soldier's health and welfare, took upon himself to direct that it should come into force at once, and did the like also with respect to the other variations above detailed.

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Some weeks later, when the health of the army became seriously affected, Lord Raglan, upon the advice of the Medical Department, directed that there should be temporarily added to the daily food of the soldier, two ounces of rice or Scotch barley, an extra half-pound of meat, and, above all—this was cordially appreciated—a free ration of 'spirits.' *

After landing in the Crimea it became necessary to authorise a partial withdrawal of the extra half-pound of meat; † and in the winter, for want of land-transport, the issue of rice was for some weeks suspended. In October, when the work in the trenches proved trying, Lord Raglan ordered an extra ration of rum for the troops, and a third portion also for those who were on duty at night, either as guards, or on picket, or with working parties. ‡ He afterwards ordered that the issue of rice should be resumed. §

Subject only to those brief, though still distressing delays which will be afterwards mentioned, the provisions thus destined for our troops were punctually issued to them, and in general were very good of

* The thirty-second part of a gallon.

† The ultimate direction was that when fresh meat could be obtained, the soldier's daily meat-ration should weigh a pound and a quarter.

‡ Mr Filder, a veteran campaigner and an excellent judge of such, said, speaking of the effect of the rum upon the men during the sufferings of the winter, 'nothing seemed to do them so much good.'

§ Lord Raglan also ordered an addition of one-third of a pound to the ration of biscuit, but—after an interval of three weeks—he was obliged to discontinue that increase, because the Commissariat General represented that if subjected to a demand so largely augmented, his supplies would not hold out.

their kind; but with the approach of winter, and the simultaneous exhaustion of the supplies of cattle obtained at Eupatoria, the issues of fresh meat became necessarily less and less frequent, because the means of sea-transport were wanting. *

The coffee was issued by the Commissariat in a green state, and at first with advantage and satisfaction to the soldier, for he had no difficulty in roasting and pounding it; † but when the winter set in, the trouble of obtaining fuel became much greater than before; and to men cruelly overworked, as they then were, and weakened too by their sufferings, a ration of coffee already roasted would have been infinitely more welcome than the green berries.

So early as the 24th of October, Lord Raglan began his endeavours to obtain fresh vegetables for our troops in sufficient abundance; and not content with his pressing instructions on this subject to the Commissariat, he strove to find them the shipping with which to effect the importations; whilst, more-

* Sailing vessels at that time of the year proved wholly unfit for the transport of cattle across the Black Sea, and it was only occasionally that the Commissariat could for this purpose command the use of a steamer.—See *ante*, p. 102.

† When the soldier was camped before Sebastopol in the autumn of 1854, the very enemy used to send him the means of roasting and pounding his coffee; for fragments of shell served capitally for both the processes. The camp used in those days to be fragrant with the aroma—too rare in England—the aroma given out by the coffee-berry whilst scorching under the action of heat. In one of our campaigns at the Cape, green coffee had been found to answer its purpose admirably, for there the roasting and pounding of the berry proved easy enough; and besides, in its green state, coffee had the great advantage of not being spoilt by wet.

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over — encroaching a little on Mr Filder's department—he directed the commandant at Varna to send fresh vegetables by every vessel thence sailing. But although these efforts resulted in extensive purchases and shipments, they did not and could not provide for the cargoes such smooth voyages over the sea as might ensure their arrival in an undamaged state; and the quantity brought up to camp in good condition, proved constantly less than was wanted for the welfare and health of our troops.*

Lord Raglan followed up his efforts to obtain for the soldiers good and well-chosen articles of food by requiring that general officers should enforce due attention to the messing of the men and the dressing of their food; but the unskilfulness of the young English soldier in such matters was not a defect that could be removed by word of command.

Lord Raglan had always been anxious that our soldiers when stationary should have the comfort of leaven bread, and on the very next day but one after the Council of the 6th of November, he instructed the Commissary-General to inform the Treasury that he wished to have a steam-mill and bakery sent out 'with all practicable despatch.'† His thought-

* Chelsea Rep., p. 373. Whenever, after the 10th of December, supplies of fresh vegetables came in, the men had them gratis; but as regards this portion of the food provided for the soldier, he seems to have been rather indifferent; so that when apprised, as sometimes happened, that a supply of fresh vegetables awaited his pleasure, he too often spared his weary limbs the trouble of fetching them. Whether from prejudice or for some good reason, he long rejected the preserved potato, and only after nearly two months began to try it.

† Mr Filder to Sir C. Trevelyan, 8th November 1854.

ful design was long baffled by the dilatoriness which too often marked operations attempted in England;* but meanwhile, the biscuit supplied for the use of our troops proved always to be of excellent quality.

To many of those who are conversant with the feeding of armies, it may seem that the provision thus made for the sustenance of our troops was good and almost complete; but an article still remains to be noticed, which was one of great moment to health. From the time when our army was perceived to be in danger of having to winter on the Chersonese, it became possible to foresee that the supply of fresh meat and vegetables would fall off, and that the soldier living mainly thenceforth upon biscuit and salt meat would be needing, as much as do sailors, some antidote to the inroads of scurvy. In the autumn, accordingly, Dr Andrew Smith — always early in his provident counsels—recommended that large quantities of lime-juice should be sent out, and, a portion of this supply, 20,000 pounds in weight, reached Balaclava on the 19th of December;† but the medical authorities in the Crimea did not know, it would seem, that they had this resource close at

* The London authorities and the people they employed took between them *more than six months* in meeting this requisition!

† In the Esk, Second Seb. Comm., Rep., p. 503, and—correcting the date—Chelsea Rep., p. 374. I have not Dr Andrew Smith's requisition before me, but it seems to have been made in October 1854, and upon so large a scale—40,000 lb. to begin with—as to make some of the authorities imagine there must be a mistake. Dr Andrew Smith, however, meant nothing less than that there should be a ration of three ounces of the lime-juice for every soldier during a period of three months.

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hand, or else did not at first see its value; for until Lord Raglan happily interposed—and by that time the scurvy (though not at first perfectly recognised) had already proved baneful to health and life—no steps were taken for issuing the juice to our soldiery as part of their daily rations.*

II.

The shelter provided for the French army.

With means of shelter the French army was ill supplied, for it mainly used the 'tente d'abri,' a low canvas hutch, which is a miserable substitute for the ordinary tent.†

For the English.

Except when unhoused by the whirlwind of the 14th of November, the English army was at no time unsheltered by the ordinary bell tents; for although the Home Government failed to send out the new tents required until after a delay of many months, Lord Raglan found means to counteract this default by obtaining a supply from Malta.

Still Lord Raglan felt keenly that against the rigours of a winter on the Chersonese, mere canvas would afford to his troops a miserably insufficient shelter, and on the very morrow of the resolution which postponed the assault of Sebastopol, he took

Lord Raglan's immediate

* Lord Raglan's interposition occurred in this way: Having called for a return of the various goods in store, he found, when he saw it, that a large provision of lime-juice was included amongst them, and he thereupon—29th January 1855—issued an order, directing that lime-juice should form part of the soldier's ration.

† As is fully shown, *post*, chap. vii. sect. i.

measures providing for the now too probable eventuality of a lengthened detention on the Chersonese; and under his sanction, the Quartermaster-General required the Commissariat to send officers to Constantinople and several of the ports on the Black Sea, with orders to purchase large quantities of the timber, the nails, the tools, and all the materials necessary for the construction of huts. This mission (which went accompanied by an officer of Engineers) proved completely successful; and with remarkable promptitude great quantities of timber and the other needed materials were brought into the port of Balaclava; but the task of dragging up all this timber to the heights of the Chersonese, and converting it into huts, was destined to be long retarded by the two great wants oppressing the English army—that is, want of land-transport, and want of 'hands.'

measures for hutting the troops.

III.

Lord Raglan's demands for warm clothing had been not only urgent, but made in good time, and the Home Government had responded so well to his instances, that before the rigours of winter began, there was lying on board vessels anchored off Balaclava an immense supply of all the thick woollen coverings that seemed best adapted for the comfort of our soldiery; and although we shall have to learn that this welcome supply was destroyed by the fury of a tem-

Warm clothing.

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pest, we shall also discover that by an instant and well-applied act of energy, Lord Raglan proved able to replace in great measure the treasure thus snatched from his people. It will soon appear only too plain that for want of land-transport our soldiery did not quickly possess themselves of the means of comfort awaiting them in their port of supply; but from the moment when Lord Raglan succeeded in partly counteracting the tempest by obtaining warm clothes from Constantinople, the obstacle which prevented the soldiers from appropriating these things was simply want of land-transport between Balaclava and the camp.

IV.

Provision made by the French for the care of their sick and wounded.

With their aptitude for organisation and management—with the fitly constructed machinery of a real War Department, and besides, with the store of experience daily gained in their African warfare—the French had not failed to provide an efficient 'Ambu-'lance Corps,' comprising not only skilled directors, intendants, and medical officers, but also infirmary orderlies, well trained for their tasks; and they did not omit to keep ready all the many appliances needed for removing the soldier when wounded or sick, and securing to him at last good, careful treatment in hospital.

For this provident use of State power France had a deserved reward in the excellence, nay, the seeming perfection, of her well-ordered hospitals; and, if grave

defaults all the while lay hidden under the surface, these were owing apparently to individual acts and neglects not easily brought to light, and hardly therefore avertible by administrative forethought or care.

By the English.

In this business of making beforehand due provision for the sick and the wounded, there was the difference of actual opposites between our Allies and ourselves; for the French proceeded by means of a perfected organisation, kept in vigour by constant use, whilst for any such purpose as that of forming general hospitals to meet the wants of a campaign, the English —strange as it seems—had no organisation at all. Debarred in the way we have seen from the possession of a real War Department, our people either omitted to harbour troublesome thoughts about war administration, or else vaguely hoped that the general commanding their army in the field would somehow make his headquarters a second Whitehall, and there plant that official machinery for sustaining a modern campaign which — because of the strife then still smouldering between Crown and Parliament—could find no existence at home. Our people had fondly accustomed themselves to lean on the great Shade of Wellington, and their habit—never a safe one—was more than commonly dangerous when tending to make them improvident with respect to the care of their sick; for with our army in the Peninsula, the number of men on its sick-lists was so grievously, so constantly large, and in general its death-rate so high, as to prevent the system there followed from becoming at all a good sample of care for the health of

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our soldiers; and besides, the accustomed expedient of leaving the establishments for invalided troops to the general commanding in the field was inapplicable to conditions demanding his ceaseless presence at the theatre of war, yet requiring that all the main hospitals which had to be founded should be hundreds of miles in his rear.

The administrative arrangements provided for the care of our stricken soldiery were slight, rude, and indeed almost primitive.

Insufficiency of their preparations for the care of the sick and wounded.

To receive the sick and the wounded, there was first, a stretcher (carried by bandsmen or other soldiers) for moving the sufferer from the ground where he lay; then the tent or marquee, in which he was to find the 'field hospital;' then the cart or pannier, used in transferring him to some other kind of hospital, or bringing him down to the coast; then some means of embarking him; then a ship voyaging over the seas that would bear him to a more southern clime; then means of landing and carrying him; and at last his appointed hospital awaiting him on the shores of the Bosphorus, or on some other not distant coast.

The failure of our war administration in all those successive stages would seem to have resulted quite naturally from that want of commanding authority by which, as we saw, Dr Andrew Smith remained baffled when addressing his appeals to the Horse Guards. The London departments provided no efficient ambulance corps, appropriated no sufficient, no well-fitted vessels to the care and transport of our

stricken soldiery—sent out no artificers of the kind demanded—refused Admiral Boxer's wise prayer for a 'receiving ship' at Constantinople;* and although, it is true, sending out a few of the men and the things that would be needed for general hospitals, they did not either construct any such institutions themselves or directly entrust the task to other servants of State.† Amongst the men sent out, there were medical officers of various ranks, though not in sufficing numbers, and there were also purveyors, not apparently so chosen or so instructed that they would prove ready instruments for either effecting purchases or employing hired labour. But for attendance upon our sick and wounded men in hospital, the war administration, at first, made no provision at all; and in the absence of hospital orderlies duly trained for the work, our people had to rely upon the clumsy old plan of drawing sergeants and soldiers from the ranks to make them do the duty of nurses. But even this was not all that the perverseness of the system contrived; for when the orderlies, and the sergeants especially, had, after a while, learnt their work and become at last more or less skilled in the performance

* A receiving ship, asked for in good time—so early as the 8th of September 1854—'for invalids and supernumeraries, with an experi-'enced master, surgeon, a sergeant's guard of marines, three good war-'rant officers, and a small gang of artificers and mechanics.' The application, refused at first, was granted some months afterwards; and Sir James Graham expressed his regret for the error he had committed in refusing the application, with a candour which disarms censure.—Seb. Comm., 4th Rep., pp. 264, 265.

† For a conjecture as to the resource upon which our rulers were leaning, see the next footnote.

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of their hospital duties, they used to be called back to their regiments, and replaced by uninstructed beginners. Our administrators did not even take care that the principal medical officer should be opportunely at hand; for, to head the medical staff forming part of Lord Raglan's army, they thought fit to appoint Dr Hall—an officer then serving in India, and not destined to reach the Levant in time to see the beginning of our general hospital system.

So the medical care of our troops when brought out to the East was administered during some weeks through the old regimental machinery; but on reaching the shores of the Bosphorus, and assuming the command of our army, Lord Raglan made haste to adopt the plan of having general hospitals. One of these—called The General Hospital*—he himself established at Scutari, the suburb—lovely yet mournful with its palaces, its tombs, and its cypresses—which looks across to Constantinople from the Asiatic side of the Straits. A fine building obtained for the purpose afforded space enough for the wants of nearly 900 patients; and whilst under the eye of Lord Raglan, with, moreover, no huge crowd of sick to strain its resources, the 'General Hospital' proved itself a good beginning and sample of the newly centralised system.† The two favourable conditions were neither

* The designation was at first generic, distinguishing the new establishment from *regimental* hospitals; but when *other* general hospitals had been founded, the designation—no longer generic—became a proper name, distinguishing the particular institution which Lord Raglan had organised from all the rest of our hospitals.

† The establishment of this institution by Lord Raglan in person

of them destined to last; for Lord Raglan—approaching the enemy—moved forward to other regions, and the few men—few by comparison—invalided in June 1854 were unhappily about to be followed by cargoes and cargoes of helpless sufferers brought down from the seat of war in numbers appallingly great. But the good beginning it made under the auspices of Lord Raglan must apparently have governed the destiny of this General Hospital; for, if not indeed perfect, yet in comparison with our other establishments it seems to have been always well ordered.

Our establishment of hospitals in the Levant extended at one time to the Dardanelles, spreading even yet further south to Rhodes as well as to Smyrna; and we had some floating infirmaries in the Golden Horn, of which one — always ably conducted — belonged to the Royal Navy. For the most part, however, our hospitals in the Levant were established on the shores of the Bosphorus, and amongst these, the one at Pera appropriated to our sailors was always, it seems, well ordered. Amongst the hospitals for our land-service troops on the shores of the Bosphorus, the one at Koullali received a large number of patients; but by far the greatest part of our Levantine hospital system became concentrated

was apparently the exact kind of aid to which our Government trusted when omitting itself to provide for the organisation of general hospitals; but at even an early period, there were ample grounds for inferring that the campaigns undertaken would draw the commander of our army into countries far north of the Bosphorus, and it would therefore seem clear that, to meet the want caused by his absence, men competent to organise hospitals should have been sent to the Levant in good time, with full powers and specific instructions.

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at Scutari, and there perhaps one may say — rife with horror and anguish and death—was the capital city of those who watched over the sick and the wounded—the prostrated part of our army.*

The opening of the 'General Hospital' at Scutari was followed up two months later by planting a second and more extensive establishment in another part of the town; and thenceforth, although other buildings were subsequently used for like purposes, this vast Barrack Hospital—for that was the name it bore—continued to be the greatest of all, becoming also pre-eminent for the sufferings and mortality long rife in its wards and corridors, but now, moreover, remembered, and destined to be remembered hereafter, because it was here that the heroine whose name is worshipped in England long strove and fought for our soldiery against a host of destroyers—destroyers more to be dreaded than all the enemy's legions.

When Lord Raglan, moving up to Bulgaria, could no longer in person be watching our hospital system at Scutari, he there left in command Major Sillery; and, although the power of this officer might have borne at the time fair proportion to his then sphere of action, it was far from being commensurate with the hugely augmented burthen laid on him a few months later, when the overcharged Scutari hospitals were receiving shiploads and shiploads of sick and wounded men brought down from empoisoned and

* The 'Medical Headquarters' at Scutari were in the 'General Hospital;' but except when he paid a visit of inspection, the principal medical officer used to be at the seat of war.

war-stricken lands, where epidemic and other diseases and cruel privations and hardships were largely surpassing battles in the work of disabling and slaying.

Since Lord Raglan at that time was busied at a seat of war lying severed from our Levantine hospitals by a distance of hundreds of miles, he of course could only make his power reach them by acting through others, and could only through others acquire any knowledge of their condition or wants. Without being unduly trustful, he apparently might have felt very sure that his subordinates would duly apprise him of any serious wants affecting our Levantine hospitals which could not be met on the spot; and since no complaints from those quarters found their way to him in the Crimea, he had evidently some right to conclude that all must be going on well. He did not, however, thus trust to merely negative proof, for in October he despatched to the Levant his principal medical officer with instructions to inquire into the state of the hospitals. Dr Hall, obeying these orders, went down to the Levant, passed some weeks in examining the hospitals, and reported that their state was 'as good as could be expected;' but this was not all, for whilst at Constantinople (after having been wounded at Inkerman), Sir George Brown reported to Lord Raglan that he had minutely examined our hospital establishment at Scutari and 'found it in a very satisfactory state.'* With such information to guide him, and none other as yet counteracting it, Lord Raglan perforce believed that

* Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, Jan. 1, 1855.

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all must be going on well. It was only from civilians and from England that Lord Raglan afterwards learnt what we now indeed know to have been the true state of our Levantine hospitals, and we shall see him then taking a step which proved to be exactly the right one.

A want of men not only versed in organisation and management, but also well armed with authority, and aware that they might use it with boldness —this would seem to have been the main cause of almost all that went wrong in the internal administration of the establishments. Though not in sufficing numbers, a staff of medical officers of various ranks —men devoted to their professional duties as physicians and surgeons—had been brought together at Scutari, but they all, it seems, found cast upon them a load of strictly medical work; and there was nothing in the tenor of their instructions that would make them lay it aside to become, as it were, the creators of a hospital system vast enough for the wants of our army. Dr Menzies himself (the superintendent and chief) committed the mistake of allowing himself to be overwhelmed with work, such as that of consulting in difficult cases, performing with his own hand the gravest of the surgical operations, and moreover invaliding men, holding boards, making monthly and quarterly returns, and daily and weekly reports, and it was hardly fair to expect that whilst thus multifariously engaged, he would also prove able to organise, to maintain and to govern establishments which were not only complex and vast, but contin-

ually needing enlargement. He disclosed no such power.* Neither he nor the other medical officers, nor even, indeed, Major Sillery could apparently receive the conviction that for all proper hospital purposes, they might use and use freely the public treasure of England.† Ill salaried, ill treated by the State, schooled down into habits of resignation, and bending under a load of professional work which they performed with a generous zeal, the medical officers acted as though there should be no discontent—as though not only on behalf of themselves, but also on behalf of their patients, they ought to accept all the miseries which crowded in on the hospitals as dispensations resulting from war—dispensations to be borne with that silent, that soldierly fortitude which disdains the resource of complaint; and they even, indeed, went the length (like Brown and Cathcart at Inkerman) of refusing to acknowledge a want. Dr Hall's approving report of our Bosphorus hospitals must apparently have owed its source partly to this soldier-like habit of mind, but also in part to a notion that 'war-time' excused huge shortcomings.‡ Yet although, of course, the campaign

* Seb. Comm., 5th Report.

† After lengthened inquiry it seemed to have been considered that Major Sillery, and some of the others concerned in the hospital administration, had *constructively* a right to draw for all the funds needed; but candid men will admit that the possession of this constructive authority was not like having the power conferred by written orders and warrants.

‡ The warm and decisive language in which Sir George Brown bore witness to the 'satisfactory state' of our Bosphorus hospitals must be accounted for in a different way. At the time when he visited them, the improvements resulting from the new and powerful element

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was what caused our sick-lists to swell, this easy plea of 'war-time' had no very evident bearing upon the transaction of business at Scutari, where people were as safe as in Kent from any hostile disturbance. On a peaceful shore reached by our shipping, with the use of magnificent buildings, with unbounded command of money, and the resources of a populous city, lying ready, and close at hand, there was nothing except the want of a clearly confided authority and the want of sufficing brain-power to prevent our Levantine hospitals from being made as good as any existing in Europe. For a long time, however, those wants, although not of the sort one calls 'physical,' were nevertheless grave enough to be obstacles forbidding improvement; and indeed it is only too plain that the absence of official complaint proceeding from the right quarter would hinder the very beginning of attempts to reform what was wrong.

The supply of things bitterly needed for the use of our hospitals was hampered, and for a long time prevented by a want of decisive authority in those to whom people looked for the making of the requisite purchases. The purveyors at one time occasioned, it seems, some embarrassment by repudiating or question-

acceding on the 4th of November, had already made so great a progress that, in the eye of one not having a very high standard of hospital excellence, and only examining the internal administration, and doing this perhaps superficially, there might seem to be little room for unfavourable criticism; but if Sir George had looked into the statistics of the establishments, and seen the rate of mortality, his conclusion must perforce have been altered.

ing their allegiance to any other authority than that of the department at home; and besides, having long been accustomed to act under a tightened system of audit, they had become so cramped by the discipline as to be hardly capable of launching out into that free, unhesitating expenditure which the occasion required.

The London departments omitted to follow up their own orders for proper hospital furniture, and proper hospital stores, so that neither did they effect the prompt transport of even the inadequate cargoes they had made up their minds to send out, nor do so much as account for the failure of their limited efforts;* and to meet the wants caused by abounding defaults of this kind, there was no one at first so bold that he would dip in the great purse of England and send across to Constantinople for the purchase of the needed supplies. The Home Government seemingly feared that a hitch of this kind might occur, and, with the best of intentions, it authorised our ambassador at the Porte to supply freely all the funds needed for any hospital purposes; but this expedient failed. Lord Stratford de Redcliffe of course could scarce force money into the hands of men saying they did not require it; and the reluctance of the hospital authorities to confess any want was an obstacle not to be conquered by opening what was only in substance one channel the more for effecting Government payments.

* When the Sebastopol Committee reported in June 1855, it had not been able to learn what had become of large portions of the stores sent out in the previous year.

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To all these shortcomings on the part of the London authorities, one more must be added. The government of free States can hardly be expected to march in the van of civilisation, and it would therefore be hard to let loose on administrators a pitiless torrent of blame for having omitted to take so very novel a measure as that of sending out engineers to guard the health of our army; but apparently there is no room to doubt that a sanitary expedition of that kind, if despatched in good time, might have saved great numbers of lives.* Modern science has learnt, and is patiently trying to teach that when human beings in numbers long remain closely gathered together upon ground unprepared for such crowding, they too often generate, or rather perhaps diffuse, poisons destructive of health and life—poisons not to be conquered by medicine or well-chosen food, or by the good internal management of houses or hospitals, but yielding, and yielding promptly, to the onset of the skilled engineer, who leads his chosen band of artificers, and his workmen with pickaxe and spade. Whilst Lord Aberdeen's Government lasted, no effort of that kind was made to defend the health of our army.

With the knowledge we now have acquired of the absence of an anterior organisation for hospital construction and management, and the want that there

* This is almost conclusively shown by the account of what happened in March 1855, after the arrival of the Sanitary Commissioners. —See *post*, chapter x.

was of authority and active brain-power applied to make good past neglect, we can scarcely help inferring beforehand that the endeavours of our people to deal with any very large numbers of sick and wounded men might be long and grievously baffled.

V.

Undue amount of work cast upon the English soldiery.

One of the causes which grievously augmented the sufferings and consequent sickness endured by our troops was the excessive—the almost cruelly excessive—work which this miserable siege cast upon them. When first the Allies sat down before Sebastopol, there was not so great a difference between the numbers of the French and the numbers of the English as to suggest any very unequal partition of the toil; and weeks later, when great reinforcements had brought up Canrobert's army to a strength far exceeding Lord Raglan's, our allies proved unwilling to accept a proportionate readjustment of the toil endured by the soldiery. The French commander indeed showed a generous readiness to aid the transport of our sick and wounded men with the resources of his Ambulance Corps; and Lord Raglan's appeals to him for a fairer distribution of the siege labours between the troops of the two Allied armies, did not certainly encounter a complete and final rejection, but they were invariably met by General Canrobert with reasons for postponing the desired relief, and

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afterwards by delays still more lengthened than the reasons first suggested could warrant.*

Thus it happened that the complication of hardships endured by our soldiery included an amount of toil which was cruelly and unfairly excessive. For the error, if error there was, in tolerating all this French evasiveness, Lord Raglan was plainly answerable; but it will be acknowledged that the alternative open to him was one of a formidable kind. For, although it be true that to go on enduring the injustice from week to week was to leave our weakened soldiery under a burthen wrongly apportioned, there is also strong ground for saying that the opposite, the peremptory course of action, might have brought about an evil of huge proportions—a disagreement or even a rupture with the French, and that too in front of the enemy. No dilemma more embarrassing to a general could well be imagined. On the one side, a certainty that the sufferings of our troops would continue undiminished, and that many a life would be sacrificed; on the other, a risk, a grave risk, of disaster to the whole Allied army, resulting from want of concord.

* This condensed statement is based upon numerous passages contained in Lord Raglan's despatches, as well as his private letters; and in the event of Marshal Canrobert's thinking fit to challenge my words, I shall not be unwilling to cite the authority on which I rely. Amongst the despatches and private letters referred to, there are the following: Despatches, 'Secret,' January 5, 1855; No. 145, January 13, 1855; 'Secret,' January 20, 1855; No. 150, same date; 'Secret,' January 22, 1855; Private Letters, December 30, 1854; January 15, 1855; (several passages) January 29, 1855.

VI.

Their state of health.

From the time when these armies were first smitten in Bulgaria, they had been ceaselessly pursued—pursued over sea, pursued in their marches, pursued in the very hour of battle by not only the cholera but a whole train of other disorders; and it was owing to sickness much more than to losses in combat that —notwithstanding the large reinforcements already obtained — the whole strength of their 'effectives' now present under arms in the Crimea fell grievously short of the numbers despatched from England and France. But the full measure of the evil which bodily ailments inflicted is not to be perfectly gauged by counting the men dead from illness, and those reported as 'sick;' for the bane of the poison which slew or disabled thousands was felt in lesser degree by many, very many, of the soldiery who, although not so prostrated as to be unfit for duty, and therefore not 'invalided,' were still in a lowered condition of health, and ill qualified to encounter the huge accumulation of hardship and work which was soon to be trying their strength.*

* Writing from his headquarters at Varna on the 14th of August, Lord Raglan says: 'It is curious that where no great fatigues have 'been endured, the effects of the climate, *independent of the cholera*, 'should have proved so serious; and from the officers having suf-'fered so much it is clear that illness has not been induced by priva-'tion. One month ago every commanding officer would have volun-'teered to say that he had fewer sick than he would have had in the United Kingdom. Now they would one and all state that *no man in*

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So early as the 23d of October, Lord Raglan had addressed the Duke of Newcastle impressively on this anxious subject. 'I may be permitted,' he writes, 'to say a word with regard to this army. It requires, 'and should not be denied, repose. Although the 'marches have not been many, fatigue has pressed 'heavily upon the troops. The very act of getting 'water, and of finding wood, has been a daily unceas- 'ing exertion, and the climate has told upon them; 'and, independently of cholera, sickness has prevailed 'to a great extent since the third week in July. 'Cholera, alas! is still lingering in the army.'

Repose! The army thus truly described as needing 'repose' on the 23d of October was the one we saw attacked two days later on the plains of Balaclava, the one we saw wrestling for life before another fortnight had passed against the myriads of its Inkerman assailants, the one we shall see dwindling down to a shadow of its former self under stress of work cruelly excessive, under stress of cold, wet, and hardship, and of sickness resulting from want, but sickness besides of a kind which no human care could ward off; for already—and I speak as from nearly the middle of November—that fell cholera which three weeks before had only been 'lingering' was again in new strength—again making fatal ravages.*

'*the ranks*, though not on the sick-list, feels well or is capable of the 'exertion he would display at home.'—To Duke of Newcastle. Notwithstanding the change from Bulgaria to the Crimea, this statement continued to be applicable.

* 'Cholera in an aggravated form made its appearance amongst them' [the newly-arrived troops] 'and proved very destructive.'—Report of

Under these conditions the Allied armies, still engaged day and night in a siege which they could not remit, held fast the bleak heights of the Chersonese, and there — uncomplaining and loyal — awaited the close grasp of winter.

Inspector-General of Hospitals enclosed in Lord Raglan's despatch, No. 164.

CHAPTER VII.

THE HURRICANE OF THE 14TH OF NOVEMBER.

I.

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In the evening of the 13th of November after wild storms of wind and rain there set in a calm which lasted until an hour before sunrise on the following day; but then over the open downs on the Chersonese, and the neighbouring coasts, harbours, and roadsteads, there swept on the 14th of November a violent hurricane accompanied by thunder and lightning, by heavy rain, hail, and sleet, and followed, before the day ended, by driving snow.* The storm, it appears, was a cyclone revolving upon a centre which passed from south to north at the rate of no more than some twenty miles an hour, but on this moving axis the whirlwind flew round with a velocity said to have reached to nearly a mile in the minute.† Of the French shipping, one man-of-war,

The cyclone of the 14th of November.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, November 15.

† 'Cinquante-deux milles à l'heure' is stated to have been the rate ascertained by M. Keller, a distinguished 'Ingénieur hydrographique' of the French navy. His report is cited as a trustworthy authority by Marshal Niel ('Siege of Sebastopol'), and it is upon this work (p. 101) that I have ventured to rest the above statement.

the Henri IV., one despatch-boat, and several supply-vessels and transports were lost;* but it was upon the English supply-ships, and the English camp that the disasters most heavily fell. Of the vessels freighted with munitions and stores for our army no fewer than twenty-one were dashed to pieces and totally wrecked, with grievous loss of life, whilst eight besides were dismasted.† The Retribution (having H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge on board‡) had her rudder unshipped, lost two of her anchors, and was long in extreme peril. Indeed, it was at the cost of throwing overboard his upper-deck guns that Captain Drummond proved able to save her.§ Even in the little land-locked pool of Balaclava, the shipping there huddled was grasped, as it were, and confounded and rudely battered together, by the whirling tornado; whilst, moreover, the captains of vessels which had been lying outside, seized the one hope of saving their crafts which seemed to be left them, and lawlessly drove their way in, carrying yet more confusion and havoc into a crashing thicket of bulwarks, and masts, and spars.

On shore no less than at sea the hurricane raged.

* Ibid.

† 'Official Journal of the Royal Engineers,' p. 53. There the list of the wrecked and dismasted vessels will be found.

‡ On the 7th of November the fatigued condition of H.R.H. had made it expedient for him to seek a few days of rest by going on board ship.

§ Duke of Cambridge to Lord Raglan, 15th November 1854: 'Drum-'mond,' H.R.H. writes, 'behaved nobly, and but for him and God's 'merciful hands we must have gone.'

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It tore up trees by the roots, and not only were houses unroofed, but even those vast sheets of metal which covered in the naval magazines of Sebastopol were partly carried away.* Into the camp of the Allies the tempest at once brought 'unspeakable misery.'† The tents not only fell, but were many of them torn to pieces and swept away utterly, with all the things they contained.‡ Affrighted horses broke loose, and (until struck down by the whirlwind) fled wildly in all directions. Waggons were overturned, and of those stores of food and forage which had been brought up to camp, great quantities were destroyed or spoilt. The hospital marquees presented so great a breadth of canvas to the rage of the blast that, in spite of every effort to uphold them, they were almost the first tents to fall; and thus not only men fit for duty, but the wounded, the sick, the dying, became exposed all at once to the biting cold of the blast, and deluged with rain and sleet.§ The trenches were quickly flooded. The soldiery were unable to cook their food, for no camp-fires could be lit. To this miserable condition of things no remedy could at once be applied; for the storm made it hard in the extreme to move from one spot to another, and not only men on foot, but the horses of riders attempting to make head against the blast were

* Neil, p. 101.
† Journal of the Royal Engineers, p. 53.
‡ Ibid. § Ibid.

again and again overthrown.* Under the fall of snow which began when the storm was abating many laid themselves down without having tasted food, and some, benumbed by cold, were found dead the next morning in their tents.†

But the mischiefs and sufferings thus immediately inflicted by the storm were as nothing to the pressure of those ulterior wants which might result from the loss of supplies. Amongst the twenty-one English vessels wrecked, was the Prince, a ship 'containing 'everything that was most wanted: warlike stores 'of every description, surgical instruments, guern-'sey frocks, flannel drawers, woollen stockings and 'socks, boots, shoes, watch-coats—in short, all that 'the foresight of the Government could devise for 'the equipment and comfort of the troops.'‡ The Resolute, too, suffered total wreck, and she was the principal ammunition-ship of our army. Of the Minié ammunition alone, there went down in her hull no less than ten million rounds.§ The loss of provisions and stores on board other wrecked ships was appallingly great;‖ the hay destroyed being in quantities that would have sufficed for all the horses and mules of our army during a period of twenty days.¶ That

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, 15th November.

† 'Journal of the Royal Engineers,' p. 55.

‡ Ibid. § Ibid.

‖ Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 18th November: 'You can-'not,' he says, 'send us too many supplies of all kinds.'

¶ Ibid. 'Mr Filder's great fear,' writes Lord Raglan, 'is want of 'forage for the horses. He lost twenty days' hay by the tempest.

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loss of hay was one destined to prove beyond measure calamitous.

Lord Raglan's sense of the disaster.

It was natural that on the morrow of a disaster which brought on his troops cruel sufferings, Lord Raglan for once should permit himself to utter the anguish he felt;* but he was not a man so constituted that his energies could be even momentarily repressed by this kind of misfortune. Without losing an hour he applied himself to the task of providing for the speediest possible replacement of his lost stores; and so steadfast was his presence of mind, so admirable his skill in the conduct of military business, that the measures he took at the instant were as perfect in substance, and even in method and form, as if they had resulted from lengthened deliberations and a whole month of official labour. By the very despatches which announced the disaster to the Secretary of State, he imparted an officially accurate account of the ammunition and ordnance stores lost in the Resolute and the Prince, with also complete returns of the ammunition remaining in the magazine-ships, and of the warm clothing still safe on board the Jura;† and he not only prayed the Home

His measures.

'As it is, the cold of the nights kills a vast number of the animals em-'ployed for the conveyance of ammunition.'

* After speaking of the pleasure with which he had looked forward to the issue of the warm clothing newly brought by the Prince, Lord Raglan adds: 'I feel the misfortune deeply.'—Private letter to the Duke of Newcastle, 16th November. On the 18th he writes: 'Our 'wants are very numerous, and the sooner you replace the supplies lost 'in the Prince the better. The destruction of that vessel is indeed a 'heavy misfortune.'

† From Captain Dacres, the senior naval officer in the Port of Bala-

Government to send out fresh supplies with the utmost possible speed, but even went on to distinguish those portions of the required stores for which the swiftest and most powerful steamers should be chosen.* Yet whilst thus both invoking and guiding the activity of the Government at home, he likewise made haste to obtain all the help that could be drawn from the resources of countries less distant, and despatched forthwith to Constantinople an officer of the Quartermaster-General's department, with orders to purchase all the blankets and watch-coats, and other warm clothing that could there be obtained.† It was also at Constantinople that the Commissary-General made his earliest

clava, he obtained the completest account of the wrecks that could then be furnished; whilst from the reports of Colonel Dacres commanding the Royal Artillery, and Mr Young of the Field Train, and from an examination of the Jura's bill of lading, he enabled himself to give the rest of the above-mentioned information.

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, 15th November—*i. e.*, on the very morrow of the hurricane: 'I earnestly,' he says, 'recommend 'that not a moment should be lost in replacing the ammunition. The 'Commissariat losses are very heavy, and lead Mr Filder to apprehend '*that we may be very shortly deficient in supplies of provisions and forage.*' In his despatch of the next day he adds: 'I earnestly recommend that '300 rounds per gun, as well as large supplies of Minié ammunition, 'and a certain quantity of smooth-bore ammunition should be sent 'from England in a powerful and fast steamer at the earliest possible 'moment.' In his private letter of the same day (the 16th), to the Duke of Newcastle, he writes: 'The ammunition should be replaced 'instantly, the other things as soon as possible; but the Minié should 'be sent in the fleetest vessel without a moment's delay.'

† Ibid., and private letters from Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 16th and 18th November. Captain Wetherall, a man of great energy and ability, was the officer charged with this mission, and the instruction he received directs him to 'purchase all he can get'—Lord Raglan

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efforts to replace the lost stores of provisions and forage.*

The disastrous 14th of November was followed by a brief interval of fine weather; and so early as the 18th, the camps, as Lord Raglan expressed it, were 'wearing a less desolate appearance.'† But already the sufferings and privations which the storm had inflicted on our troops were resulting in an increase of sickness;‡ and the horses, too, in great numbers soon died from the effect of exposure. Nor could Lord Raglan yet venture to ask that fresh horses should be sent to him in the Crimea; for, considering the loss of the 'twenty days' hay,' he apprehended—and only too justly—that there might prove to be no means of feeding them. §

Lasting effect of the hurricane upon the condition of our troops.

Lord Raglan's measures for replacing the stores destroyed on the 14th of November, were so well conceived and so prompt, that they speedily pro-

to Duke of Newcastle, 18th November. Whilst imparting to the Government his determination to obtain what 'warm clothing' he could from Constantinople, Lord Raglan had the forethought to add: 'I would 'earnestly recommend that this should not prevent your Grace from 'forwarding from England a large supply without delay.'—Despatch to Secretary of State, 15th November.

* Ibid. 'He' [the Commissary-General], 'will write to the Com- 'missariat officer in charge at Constantinople to send up *all he can* '*procure* in that capital.'

† Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, 18th November.

‡ Ibid.

§ Lord Raglan to the Duke of Newcastle, 28th November: 'Our 'horses,' he writes, 'are dying fast, but *until we are sure that we can* '*feed them*, I would not recommend that they should receive any addi- 'tion here. But horses might be sent out with drafts of men to Kululi 'and there wait my orders, if steam conveyance could be procured for 'them, not otherwise. Sailing-ships would be destruction to them.'

duced their intended effect; but there were some of the losses, and especially the loss of the hay, which no energy exerted from the Crimea could quickly repair. And it is certain that a large proportion of the hardships endured by our army in the coming December and January, owed their source, after all, to the hurricane of the previous month.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SUFFERINGS OF THE ARMIES DURING THE WINTER.

I.

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Sufferings of the Russian army.

Of the Russians engaged during winter at this theatre of war, a great proportion lived always with a roof overhead—some being in barracks within the lines of Sebastopol, some housed in neighbouring villages, some furnished with shelter in huts which the resources of the country enabled men to construct; whilst even the troops out on duty, though suffering cruel hardships, had advantages not shared by their enemy in the opposite camp; for they mainly were people accustomed to confront and withstand northern winters, were the soldiers or the sailors of a State which perforce must equip its armed servants with means of outliving great cold; and, withal, had behind them a garrison-town and an arsenal which could not but yield them some means of struggling against the rigours of climate.

On the other hand, this Crimea was a distant, outlying province on which the Western invasion had come in some sort by surprise; so that, when great masses of troops were soon after thrown forward by

Nicholas in passionate haste, they found at the end of their marches a district not prepared for their coming by fit commissariat measures. Moreover, the roads broken up by floods upon floods of rain put obstruction not easily conquered in the way of bringing forward supplies, and—increased by such troubles whilst also yet further increasing them—administrative confusion was rife. Under stress of these hampering conditions, the subsistence of the army at one time appeared to have become insecure; but the danger in its ugliest shape was by strenuous efforts averted, so that men did not anywhere die from want—from sheer want of bread; though still they suffered privations which—along with the rigours of winter—proved largely destructive of health, and destructive also of life. The Russians, lying stricken with sickness or wounds, were at one time 25,000; and the hospital succours in readiness fell so hideously short of the need, that the number of prostrated sufferers exceeded by more than 9000 the number of hospital berths.*

II.

Sufferings of the Allied armies.

The poor Russians, succumbing to cold and privation, may have felt pangs as sharp as those suffered in the opposite camp; yet because they were lowlier

* Todleben, vol. i. p. 705 *et seq.* After saying that the number of sick was at one time 25,000, he adds, that the hospital accommodation sufficed for only 15,250 patients, thus showing that there was deficiency for 9750.

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beings, and in no sense free men, they have not a coequal space in the annals of human woe with the soldiery of the Western invaders, who sank and died from like causes.

Towards gauging the stress of the hardships undergone by the French and the English, one ought to learn at the outset what kind of winter it was that their soldiery had to confront.

General characteristics of the winter of 1854-55, in the south-west of the Crimea;

The hurricane of the 14th of November was an outburst of unexampled violence not destined to be speedily repeated in the south-west of the Crimea; but thenceforth, during more than three months, the vicissitudes of the weather prevailing on the heights of the Chersonese were of much the same kind as those that make a 'hard winter' in England. There were gusty, boisterous days; days besides — long called 'Inkerman weather'—when, the winds having lulled, there came on heavy mists and low drizzling clouds: there were periods of bitter, killing frost, days of thaw, days fair now and then, with light breezes and hours of sunshine, but followed too soon by cutting blasts, by persistent falls of snow, by storms sweeping over the hills, with sleet or torrents of rain; and meanwhile, the soldier's bed, when not one of snow or chill mud, was the bare earth, hard, frozen, and rugged, or a wet, cold, tenacious clay.

and of the state of the ground on the Chersonese.

The evils inseparable from an attempt to winter the Allied armies on the Chersonese

For troops to be lying out day and night under such hard conditions, to have their camps devastated and turned into scenes of ruin and misery by the blasts of a hurricane, and then—still on the same bleak heights, and as yet unequipped for such trials

— to go on doing battle for months against the rigours of winter—this alone was much more than enough to make their sufferings cruel and bring many a man to his grave; but whilst, so far, resulting inevitably from the determinations of the Allied commanders, and therefore from fair stress of war, and therefore, again, from the fair, though hard chances of a soldier's life, the calamity was rendered yet more pernicious by several extraneous causes already in part explained. Ills wrought by false strategy were aggravated by defective administration, and the evils thus superadded may in one sense be called 'avertible.'

without due preparation.

The calamity aggravated by 'avertible' evils.

III.

The French, as compared with our people, enjoyed, as we saw, great advantages, including, for example, their highly organised system of war administration, their mastery of the art of campaigning maintained by long practice in Africa, their comparative proximity to the country whence they drew their supplies, the spaciousness of their harbours and landing grounds, and, above all, the strength — the ample numerical strength — which enabled them to meet the exigencies entailed by their part of the siege without either overtasking their men or being left for a moment without the soldier 'hands' needed for ministering to the wants of their army. But the immunity from 'avertible' evils which rumour at one time ascribed to them was altogether imaginary; for

The sufferings and losses sustained by the French army.

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the terrible accumulation of hardships which they needs had to bear as an evil inseparable from the winter campaign was aggravated by defective arrangements, and in particular by a want of due forethought and care with respect to both shelter and food.

Shelter.

The expedient of distributing amongst the men some separate slips of canvas, which by aid of a small, short stick might be raised some three feet from the ground, was one that in Africa had proved to be more or less useful. But the notion of trusting to this little frail thing as a means of protecting troops against the rigours of the Chersonese winter was always denounced by the French, with indignation and disgust; for the shelter men found in their 'dog-tents'* was only to be gained by crawling on all-fours through the frozen or wet mud and snow without to the mud and the wet snow within.†

Warm clothing.

Before October had ended, the French War Department bought up or caused to be made a large

* It was so that the men used to call their *tentes d'abri*. The construction was called by the French a 'dog-tent,' because, like a dog, a man had to crawl into it on all-fours. Canrobert spoke with envy of the English tents, condemning the *tente d'abri* as a wretched expedient that kept his men 'dans la boue.' He said he had sent to France for tents like ours, but it seems that what his Government despatched to him was only the canvas part of the tents without the poles, and therefore—at least for the time—the supply he received proved useless. —Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 6th January 1855.

† General Bosquet, after stating to Lord Raglan on the 12th of January, that he had that morning had reported to him the seizure of 139 men in the night by frost-bite, referred to his wretched *tentes d'abri*, and said, 'Oh that I could have your tents!'—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 13th January 1855.

quantity of warm clothing for Canrobert's troops;* and so early as the 28th of November, no small part of these welcome supplies was already in camp.† But the distribution long remained incomplete; and distressing accounts of the sufferers brought down for embarkation in thin, scanty rags, show by sample what medical statements establish by wholesale in figures, and help to prove that the men suffered cruelly, and too often fatally, from wet, exposure, and cold.‡ Men in thousands were stricken with frost-bite, and of these, many died; whilst of those who survived, the main number were grievously mutilated; and indeed it is declared that but few escaped the sad fate of being maimed for life.§

Sufferings from cold.

Even when men, relieved from the trenches or from outpost duty, came back into camp for rest and food, they could not be sure of there meeting

* It is stated by a French writer (M. Rousset), who seems to have seen a list of them, that the articles thus bought or made were 60,000 cowled mantles (called by the French soldiers 'Crimeans'); 15,000 sheepskin coats, and supplies of leggings, gaiters, socks, caps, woollen gloves; 100,000 flannel belts; and 50,000 pairs of 'sabots'—*i.e.*, wooden shoes.—'Histoire de la Guerre de Crimée,' vol. i. p. 348.

† 'Déjà la capote à capuchon, le paletot de peau de mouton dominent 'dans nos camps.' Canrobert, 28th Nov.—Ibid.

‡ 'War appeared in all its horror; men exhausted by illness, scarce 'protected by a few rags of covering, arrived on the beach to be em-'barked.'—'Rapport Officiel,' p. 76. The reporter goes on to show, by way of instance, that out of the 720 hapless beings thus circumstanced, who formed the cargo of *one* vessel, the Jean Bart, 300 were frost-bitten. —Ibid.

§ 'Pendant ce mois de Janvier, il n'y en eu pas moins de 2500' [cas de congélation] 'pour *un tiers*, suivis de mort, pour la plupart de muti-'lations douloureuses; on compterait le petit nombre de ceux qui ne 'demeurènt pas à jamais estropiés.'—Ibid., vol. ii. p. 18. See further Note in the Appendix.

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Want of fuel.

the warmth of a bivouac fire; for the scarcity of fuel was sometimes extreme, and to find ignitible substances, the troops, at a great cost of labour, had to grub in the earth for roots.*

The horses of the French perishing fast from cold and want of food.

Without shelter in this severe weather, and also too often unfed, the French horses perished by hundreds;† the cavalry was almost dismounted, the artillery and the land-transport trains lost half their teams, and this at a time when double teams were needed for moving even slight loads. General Canrobert's want of means for land-transport must have become extreme, if it had not most happily proved that his African horses and mules were hardy enough to endure the trial.‡ Still, with even this precious resource, the transport-power of the French fell into a crippled state;§ and it was often by no other means than the bodily labour of the men that supplies of all kinds were brought up.‖

Their means for land-transport crippled.

* Rousset, p. 17.

† 'Les chevaux sans abri mouraient par centaines. La cavalerie 'était presque démontée. L'artillerie et le train des equipages per- 'daient la moitié de leurs attelages. . . . Il y eut des jours où 'l'administration fut hors d'etat de faire une seule distribution de 'fourrage.'—Rousset, vol ii. p. 17.

‡ Ibid.

§ A state nearly as 'desperate,' says Rousset, as the land-transport means of the English.—Ibid, p. 16. Fay, 173, 179: '. . . qu'on 'manque de moyens de transport et que l'état du sol se refuse d'ail- 'leurs complètement a tout mouvement de quelque durée.'—Canrobert, letter 28th January 1854, quoted 'Rapport,' p. 74. 'Vers la fin du 'mois' [Dec.] 'le sol des camps est tellement détrempé qu'il forme une 'vase épaisse qui rend la circulation et les communications très diffi- 'ciles.'—'Rapport,' p. 71.

‖ 'Le sol est tellement détrempé' [in January] 'qu'il a souvent fallu 'transporter *à bras* les munitions de toutes sortes et les provisions, *les* '*voitures ne pouvant circuler.*'—'Rapport,' p. 74.

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The food of the French army.

We have seen that the accustomed rations of the French soldier could scarcely be deemed sufficient for any campaign of a kind entailing hard, lasting toil, still less for sustaining him under the hardships of this Chersonese winter; * and of even this too scanty food, the issues were fitful, uncertain, and too often long interrupted. With that bread — leaven bread —which (as contradistinguished from biscuit) was almost peculiarly necessary to the wellbeing of the French soldier—he from time to time remained unsupplied.† The supplies of fresh meat were not only rare and scant, but of so poor a quality that medical science condemned them as doing but little to keep up the strength of the men; ‡ whilst of fresh vegetables there was no supply at all; § and the want of such food was not met by sending out to the troops either fruit or the juices of fruit; so that largely beyond any limits allowed by the known laws of health, men had to lean for support upon biscuit and salted meat without the counteracting aliments which such a diet required. Several little allowances were added

* *Ante*, p. 134. The normal ration of the French soldier is shown in the Appendix.

† 'Le pain fit longtemps défaut.'—Fay, p. 172. General Bosquet, writing on the 27th December, speaks of bread as a thing 'which the '1st Division has not touched since December began, except on the '7th, 12th, and 16th, and which since the same date the 2d Division 'has not touched even once.'—'Journal de la Deuzième Division.'

‡ The medical chief of the French army reported that it 'reçevait bien 'de temps en temps de la viande de bœuf ou de mouton tués en Crimée, 'mais ces animaux etaient maigres, manquaient de nourriture, et ne 'donnaient qu'une viande de très pauvre qualité, et peu réparatrice.'—'Rapport,' p. 84.

§ 'Absence *absolue* de végétaux frais.'—'Rapport,' p. 81.

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during the winter to the soldier's usual ration; * but these utterly failed to make good the want of that generous food that is needful for men suffering grievously from exposure to wet and cold. †

The French soldiery under these trials had to aid them an organisation adapted for the struggles of warfare, had the skill, the resource, the endurance, of practised campaigners,‡ had the courage, the cheerful spirit, and even at moments the gaiety for which their race has been famed; but especially, as before has been shown, they had the commanding advantage of that numerical strength which, after meeting the exigencies of attack and defence, left abundance of the 'hands' that were needed for other campaigning tasks. If they wanted new wharves or new roads, they had men enough ready to make them.§ If they stood in need of warm clothing, they at

The commanding advantages the French derived from their numerical strength.

* See statement of these in the Appendix.

† 'Rapport,' p. 81. I put this assertion in a positive form because its truth is established by the outbreak of the terrible malady which *always* results from the want of sufficing and appropriate food.

‡ Of course there were great numbers of soldiers who had never made a campaign in Africa; but even these failed not to benefit from the experience of their war-inured comrades.

§ Not, however, it is true, without putting sometimes what was thought a great strain on their powers. When they were constructing their stone-laid road from Kamiesh up to camp, the pressure caused by that and other duties was deemed to be a very serious matter in reference to its bearing on the health of the soldier, and the authorities marked with anxiety that his nights for rest were only *one in two*.—'Rapport,' p. 56. Compare this French thoughtfulness with the wild guidance offered by London advisers who, when our poor soldiers were having but one night of rest *out of five*, would have had them work so much more, and rest so much less, as to be able to construct all at once a stone-laid road some eight or nine miles in length! The strain afterwards became yet greater. 'Our men are on duty *five nights out of six*.'—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, December 26, 1854.

least could go down to the port and bring up thence any articles which the intendants might be ready to issue; whilst, moreover, their numbers enabled them to find and appropriate things of various kinds which afforded protection from cold; so that —taking but one ready instance—no Russian soldier fell stricken upon ground the quick Frenchmen could reach without their finding him out, becoming at once his heirs, acquiring his coat, his cloak, and his specially useful high boots. If their horses perished so fast as to cripple the usual means of land-transport, they themselves could become the carriers, bringing up by sheer bodily toil not only shot and shell for their part of the siege, and supplies for their camp, but also coming generously to the aid of our perishing army by helping it in the transport of sick, and of ammunition and food. If fuel was so scarce that it could only be won by the patient labour of numbers of men digging underground for fibres and roots, the 'hands' they required for this labour were always in readiness. If their rations were not of such kind as to sustain them in health and strength when suffering the rigours of winter, they at least had amongst them a sufficient number of men who —not having been utterly crushed by excessive work —could and would by due preparation contrive to make the best of whatever food there might be; and General Canrobert even seems to have hoped that this same mighty resource—the resource of numerical strength—might sustain the fight against scurvy by making good the want of imported vegetables; for

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he urged his troops to labour in search of the dandelions that might be made, he fondly thought, into salad, and serve to keep down the disease which threatens men trying to live on biscuit and salted meat.*

Still their sufferings and losses very great.

Still with all these means of resistance, the gallant French after all could only fence with an evil so great, so surely destructive as that of having to winter without anterior preparation, on the bleak open Chersonese Heights; and, to go through the task without incurring horrible sufferings and cruel losses was more than lay in their power.

Difficulties obstructing fair comparison between the French and the English.

At the time, no extended comparison could well be even attempted between the condition of the French army and that of the English; because the one had its sufferings veiled by the will of an absolute Government, whilst the other lay under that glare which extreme publicity sheds, and afforded all the materials for what was, perhaps, a more searching scrutiny and a more keen-eyed criticism than had ever before been applied to the labours of men simply trying to feed, clothe, and shelter an army.

The French medical statistics.

Yet even under absolute governments, where the people are cultivated, a good deal of long-concealed truth is apt in time, though imperfectly, to force its way up towards the light; and the ruler then not seldom finds that, if only to correct misbeliefs more pernicious than the plain, naked facts, it is better to aid disclosure than vainly try to repress it. In the year 1865, about nine years after the war, a great

* Ordre Général, No. 89, 'Rapport,' p. 85.

mass of statistics illustrating the medical history of the French army in the Crimea was suffered at last to appear in an official and published Report.*

Their defective state.

For the purpose of any enquiry concerning the effect of the winter on General Canrobert's troops, these statistics have been grievously maimed by either the loss or abstraction of almost all the monthly returns from the hospitals for the year 1854, whilst, moreover, they have other defects of so grave a kind that, for even that later period to which their tables apply, they fail to afford the light needed for anything like a fair scrutiny of the sufferings and the deaths that resulted from the winter campaign;† and besides, the distracted compiler has ascribed to the very materials, which he himself gives as official, an error on so huge a scale as to make them—even where unimpeached—seem almost too fragile for use.‡

* A large quarto volume, already more than once quoted, called 'Rapport au Conseil de Santé des Armeés,' par J. G. Chenu.

† They fail, for instance, to show how many men died *in the hospitals* from frost-bite, or scurvy, or, in fact, from any other malady. There are two tables (pp. 564, 565), which, giving returns 'par maladies,' seem at first to offer the information required; but upon closer examination, they are found to contain nothing more than a recapitulation of the Ambulance Returns fused with those of four small hospitals which did not, I believe, receive any patients from the Crimea.

‡ The 'Rapport' (p. 579) states that the admissions into hospital or ambulance, in the course of the war, were 436,144, but the compiler adds an assurance that the real number of wounded and sick did not exceed 225,000 (ibid.), thus quietly ascribing to the Report an error of 211,144! The hospital returns *purport* to distinguish with care between what our statists have called 'primary admissions,' and those of patients transferred from other establishments, by separating the 'entrés par billet' from the 'entrés par évacuation;' and whilst putting those last at 119,900, they enumerate the 'primary admissions'

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The information, however incomplete, which those statistics convey.

Still the very shortcomings and errors of this great official report tend to show, perhaps, that its statements were made, at the least, in good faith; and if, therefore, we venture to accept the guidance thus offered, we learn that the admissions of patients received into the ambulances of General Canrobert's army were as follows: In October 1854, 4747; in November, 8990; in December, 6432; in January 1855, 9259; in February, 8298; in March, 7737; and in April, 6323, making altogether 51,786.*

But in the hospitals and the regimental infirmaries?† Will not this immense mass of statistics enable us to meet the inquiry which simply asks,

in figures which amount to no less than 452,223; but the compiler—perhaps rightly—warns us that if we were to accept the official account of 'primary admissions' (even putting it, as in the summary, at only 436,144) we should be counting tens of thousands of patients twice over.—Ibid. The error (if error there was) would seem to have been caused by treating as 'entrés par billet' patients received from on board ship who, though not transferred from any other *hospital*, strictly so called, had come nevertheless from the *ambulances*. To people unversed in the medical statistics of armies, a statement showing 'admissions' largely in excess of strength is apt to be startling, but may nevertheless be accurate. *Every* ailment that puts a soldier 'off duty' for the moment shows itself in the form of a 'hospital admission.'

* 'Rapport,' pp. 58, 69, 72, 75, 82, 89, and 91, and this out of a strength of—

In October 1854,	45,000
November,	56,000
December,	65,000
January 1855,	78,000
February,	89,000
March,	95,000
April,	91,000

—Ibid.

† Besides the ambulances and the hospitals, there were 'regimental infirmaries,'—one for each regiment, with means of receiving fifty patients in each.

How many men, whether placed in the ambulances or the regimental infirmaries or in hospitals, were lying invalided at the close of each month? Well, no; for of patients received in the regimental infirmaries, these statistics say nothing; and respecting the men left in hospital at the close of October, November, and December, the official revealers are silent; but upon entering the new year, State authority allows to explorers a greater volume of light, and assures them that, at the close of January 1855, the French troops lying wounded or sick, in ambulance or hospital, were together 9263; at the close of February, 9645; at the close of March, 12,238; and at the close of April, 11,770.*

With these numbers before him, and also a set of figures denoting the strength of Canrobert's army at the end of each month, a statist will quickly educe what he calls the 'percentages,' but he still must remain quite unable to gauge the full effect of the winter on General Canrobert's troops, because kept (as will be presently seen) without any knowledge of the deaths that took place in the hospitals during the latter months of the year 1854; and besides, he will find himself baffled by the ceaseless stream of reinforcements flowing out at this time to the East from France and Algeria. For as often as any such troops came fresh and sound to the Bosphorus, their arrival altered the ratio between sickness and health, as shown by the usual returns, yet effected of course no change in the bodily state

* 'Rapport,' pp. 75, 82, 89, 91, and Tables, ibid., from p. 535 to 554.

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of the men lying camped far away on the Chersonese.*

Respecting the number of deaths that took place in hospital during the period selected for scrutiny, enquiry is baffled in part by the want of any monthly returns from the hospitals for the year 1854; and all we officially learn is the fact that in those seven months which extended from the 1st October to the end of April, there died in the ambulances alone 4901 men, whilst the deaths occurring in the hospitals during only the four last of these seven months were 6557—thus bringing such of the deaths as have not been kept out of sight by the want of monthly returns to the number of 11,458.

Although left undistinguished by reference to the months in which they took place, the deaths occurring in hospital during the year 1854 were not so wholly forgotten as to be prevented from swelling the more general returns of mortality; and perhaps it may hardly be wrong to follow them into the summary where the statist has merged them with many thousands of others. The summary states that the land-service troops sent out by France to the East, from the beginning of the war to its end, were 309,268, and that the losses sustained by the French in men who were either killed, or who died from sickness or wounds or else disappeared, were 95,615.†

* See note upon this subject in the Appendix.

† 'Rapport,' p. 579. The number (inconsistently with the heading of the return) includes 308 'marins,' and 846 deaths, occurring either on board ship or in naval hospitals.

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Maladies recording the hardships endured by the French soldiers.

Frost-bite.

Scurvy.

Of the myriads of invalided soldiery consigned to the French ambulances or hospitals, very many were stricken with maladies which recorded, if so one may speak, the hardships under which they had suffered; and the numbers of men not only seized, but too often maimed, nay, too often killed, by frost-bite, bore witness to the severity of the cold they had had to endure.* And again. There is one sure disease which always becomes the Accuser —the implacable Accuser—of those who undertake, and yet fail, to provide such food for an army as may be fitted to sustain it in health. The scurvy raged; and the cause of scurvy is always one and the same—the want of appropriate food.† It was in the navy of the French that the accusing disease first appeared;‡ but it afterwards invaded their camps, and there, soon taking formidable proportions, seemed threatening to seize the whole army.§ In the month of February, 3000 of the French troops were afflicted

* In December and January alone the men brought into the ambulances, because stricken with frost-bite, were 2603.—'Rapport,' pp. 72, 75.

† Of course the question, 'What *is* appropriate food?' depends upon a variety of circumstances, as—*e.g.*, amongst others, upon the temperature and upon the quantity of work exacted. The principal medical officer of the French army thus states the cause of the scurvy afflicting Canrobert's troops: 'Les causes de l'invasion scorbutique sont, comme 'toujours, l'absence absolue de végétaux frais, l'usage prolongé de vivres 'de campagne, et surtout l'usage de la viande salée; la fatigue, pas 'assez de repos, pas assez de sommeil, le froid, et l'humidité.'—Circular of the principal medical officer, 'Rapport,' p. 81.

‡ In chronicling the medical state for December 1854, the 'Rapport' says, 'Le scorbut prend des proportions *énormes* dans la flotte'—p. 71.

§ 'Dans le mois de Fevrier, le scorbut prend un développement con- 'siderable, et ménace d'envahir toute l'armée.'—'Rapport,' p. 81.

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with scurvy—with scurvy, disclosed by the tumours, the erosions of the gums, the sores, the discharges of blood, which at once make its presence apparent to any medical eye;* and during the two months that followed, there were received into the ambulances alone, without counting men brought into hospitals, nearly 1800 new patients, all afflicted with the same fell disease.† And although for a moment drawn on beyond the first winter campaign, we yet—being now on such subjects—will stop to hear out the impeachment which scurvy, by its mere presence, brought against the Imperial Government for not duly feeding its troops. Within the whole period of twenty months, which began in November 1854, and ended in June 1856, the ambulances of the French, and four—only four—out of all their twenty-three hospitals received patients afflicted with scurvy—with palpable, recognised scurvy — to the number of 23,250 !‡

And none must suppose that the malady smote only those twenty-three thousand who were labelled as men seized with scurvy; for it is certain that of the other and yet more numerous thousands laid low by other complaints, a large proportion were men whose diseases had either been caused, or else in no small measure aggravated by the presence of the scorbutic taint.§

* Ibid.

† 836 in March, and 963 in April, making 1799.—'Rapport,' pp. 89, 91.

‡ Ibid., p. 565.

§ If a thousand men are brought into hospital for recognised scurvy,

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The sufferings of the French troops caused in great measure by administrative failure.

On the whole, it is plain that the French army during this winter was suffering—suffering cruelly, and suffering too in great measure from the inability of the war administrators to supply its wants; but, so far as concerns the first winter, it does not therefore follow at once that for this cause alone the administrators were worthy of blame; for the truth rather is that a strategy both shifting and weak had imposed upon them a task too heavy for due execution within the time sternly limited by man's want of food and warmth. But of course there was less and less ground for absolving the French Government, or even believing it competent to the transaction of warlike business, when spring and summer succeeded, when even a second year followed, and still the French soldiery in thousands were coming into hospital stricken with that accusing disease which proved them to have been kept on the Chersonese without the food needed for health.*

and five thousand more *who have had the same fare* are brought in for some of the intestinal maladies, as—*e.g.*, for dysentery, it is certain, I learn, that the five thousand, though also afflicted by other complaints, must be more or less heavily suffering from the effects of the scorbutic taint.

* Of the 23,250 French soldiers disabled by scurvy, a large proportion were men attacked in the *second* winter. Speaking of the month of December 1855, the 'Rapport' says, 'Le scorbut envahit l'armée; 'le nombre quotidien des nouveaux scorbutiques est au moins 100;' and speaking of the next month—January 1856—it says, 'Le scorbut 'prend des proportions *effrayantes*,' pp. 120, 121; and the expression, though strong, had its warrant, for the numbers admitted into the ambulances during that one month alone was no less than 3980. The Chief Officer of the Council of Health reports thus on the 31st: 'Le 'scorbut ne laissera plus si cela continue un seul des anciens soldats 'du 2me corps; le nombre des scorbutiques est énorme.' And then

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Extent to which the sufferings and losses of the French as a whole became masked from observers on the Chersonese.

So far as concerned what men saw in General Canrobert's camp, the condition of his army as a whole was well masked; for whilst constantly shipping off to his hospitals on the Bosphorus great cargoes of men wounded and sick, he from time to time also was welcoming reinforcements of fresh, healthy troops, and these reached him in numbers so great that, despite the heavy losses inflicted upon his people by disease and by combat, his strength went on increasing steadily from only 30,000 in September to 89,000 in February, and to 95,000 in March.* Of course under such conditions, his camp, more and more abounding in able-bodied troops, showed only scant signs of the havoc which wounds and sickness had wrought. It is true that the number of soldiers daily perishing in the ambulances was great, very great; but—apparently to avert that depression which was to be feared if the men should too plainly see that death was thus rife in the midst of them—an expedient which veiled this mortality from the eye of the common observer was—perhaps not unwisely—adopted. The interments were effected at night.†

The transport of the French sick and wounded

follows an indication of what (as always in case of scurvy) was the cause of the malady, "L'alimentation est plus que médiocre."—'Rapport,' p. 121.

* In December 1856, the French army of the East reached its greatest strength—viz., 145,000.

† A general officer, despatched one night by Lord Raglan to Canrobert's quarters, had been so baffled by the pitchy darkness as to have to ride vaguely till he could see a light, and then approach it for guidance. He came upon a train of carts each laden with naked, dead bodies, and these bodies he presently saw shot out massively into large pits.

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from the Crimea to the Bosphorus was too often if not always attended with the horrors and sufferings that could not but follow when these hapless martyrs of war—sometimes hundreds and hundreds together—were brought down in thin rags to the shore and placed huddled on the decks of ships ill provided, if provided at all, for the reception of any such charge;* and it is difficult to regret the neglect or even the intentional silence of the French official statists who—after allowing a glimpse of the terrible truth, leave a veil on what the patients endured whilst still alive at sea, and say nothing of the fate of those who sank and died on board ship.

The transport of the French sick and wounded by sea.

But for those who—surviving these voyages—might at last reach the shores of the Bosphorus, a welcome change was at hand. It is true that, during some months, the untiring efforts of the medical officers to heal and to cure proved too often vain;† and we know too that at a later period there took place a great falling off in the efficiency of the establishments which France had provided for her sick and wounded troops;‡ but there is ground enough for believing

Good state, at this time, of the French hospitals on the Bosphorus.

* 'Rapport,' pp. 75, 76.

† Speaking of this winter time of 1854-55, the 'Rapport' says: 'Insuccès chirurgical désolant.' . . . 'Diarrhées, dyssenteries, complications typhoïdes, et typhiques le plus souvent mortelles. Même insuccès médical. Pendant les mois de Decembre 1854, Janvier et Fevrier 1855, les insuccès auraient pu jeter les médecins dans le découragement. Les soins assidus, les traitements les mieux indiqués restaient impuissants.'—'Rapport,' p. 83.

‡ At the 'later period' above indicated, the French authorities became greatly dissatisfied with the state of their hospitals; and *our* hospitals by that time having being brought to a high state of perfection, they frankly came to our people for counsel and guidance.

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that at the time now in question—the time of the first winter campaign—the French hospitals were not only sufficing for the numbers received in their wards, but also well ordered, and, in most respects, well supplied.*

IV.

The sufferings of the English army.

Lord Raglan's army at this time was suffering—suffering cruelly—under a great complication of ills. One of these was the huge, crushing burthen of work unduly cast on our people. Their outpost duties were always anxious and harassing, their toils with spade and pickaxe fatiguing; but more irksome than all, and much more trying to health, was the task of men serving as 'guards in the trenches,' men—too often wet through from the first—who there had to be sitting all night in postures which cramped their limbs, with but little opportunity of moving except when some 'alert' called them up to meet an apprehended attack. To such tasks in the middle of winter our men were too often kept no less than five nights out of six;† and when it is remembered

Grievous excess of work imposed upon them.

* The many authorities helping to warrant this conclusion are well collected under the head of 'Hospitals,' sec. iv. p. 108, to the Index to Report of Sebastopol Committee. Of 'hospitals,' as distinct from the regimental infirmaries and from the ambulances, the French army possessed first and last as many as 23, with room for 19,182 beds.—'Rapport,' p. 103.

† 'Our men are on duty five nights out of six, a large proportion of 'them constantly under fire.'—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 26th December 1854. The 46th was at one time on duty no less than six nights out of seven.

that besides his siege labours, the soldier had yet other duties, and in particular his duties in camp, and the toil of providing for his own wants, it will be granted by all that the burthen laid upon him was excessive, so excessive indeed and so long continued that, without a motive even more cogent than a desire to carry Sebastopol, the exaction of work thus severe would scarce have been warrantable;* but the truth is, as we shall afterwards learn more particularly, that the siege operations, though of course in their nature aggressive, were still carried on at one time as a means of defence, nay, indeed, it may rightly be said as the only good expedient that could be found for warding off a ruinous disaster. A distribution of the burthen between the French and the English, if rateably adjusted to their respective numbers, would at once have relieved our people from that cruel excess of toil under which they were suffering;† but already we have learnt how it was that by the reluctance of General Canrobert to accept a fair apportionment of the siege-work, Lord Raglan was driven to the necessity of thus grievously overtasking his men.‡

* Lord Raglan always wrote with a studied moderation, but did not abstain from saying that our men were 'far more constantly employed 'than was desirable considering the time they should necessarily have 'for repose.'—To Secretary of State, 30th December 1854.

† 'I reckon that the strength of the French army at present is at 'least *four times* that of the British, and the duties of the 'corps d'ob- 'servation,' and of the troops in reserve, many thousands of which 'have recently arrived in English steamers, are comparatively light.' —To Duke of Newcastle, 15th January 1855.

‡ 'My conviction is that I have gone *as far as was politic* in my en- 'deavours to obtain the participation of the French in the occupation

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The failure of the land-transport power.

To labours thus oppressive already, yet another heavy task was superadded by the failure we saw taking place in our accustomed means of land-carriage; for, when the road from port to camp broke up and became a mere quagmire, impassable for waggons and carts,—when our transport power by that change alone was reduced at once to a third,—and when, finally, the surviving beasts of transport engaged in bringing up food proved too few and too weak for their task,—then, perforce, large detachments of our wearied troops were sent down every day from the Chersonese to fetch the needed supplies and carry them up from Balaclava after traversing miles and miles of deep clay where the lifting of the foot at each step was a separate, sometimes difficult, effort. But even this last resource was not one that completely made good the deficiency in our land-transport power. Despite all exertions, it too often happened that supplies despatched from Balaclava did not reach the camps above in good time; and unfortunately, the conditions were such after the 14th of November, that this tardiness, whenever occurring, involved a corresponding delay in the issue of food to our troops. Before that 14th of November, our

Its effect in adding to the labours of our men;

and in preventing them from receiving their supplies.

'of the position in which we stand. The advantage of keeping on 'good terms with them is too obvious to require discussion.'—Ibid. There was one obvious mode of putting pressure on the French which, however, our Government did not adopt. 'It is to be regretted,' Lord Raglan wrote, 'that when the Government resolved to furnish the 'French with steamers for the conveyance of reinforcements, they did 'not stipulate that the duty thrown on the British troops should be 'lessened according to the number of French we might carry to the 'Crimea.'—To Lord John Russell, 10th February 1855.

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troops on the Chersonese had been accustomed to have in camp a reserve of provisions that would last them for twenty-four hours; but (along with other evils unnumbered) the hurricane blotted out a whole day of Commissariat labour, thus preventing the reserve when consumed from being at once replaced; so that thenceforth, until a reserve of food could be once more established in camp, our troops, living only 'from hand to mouth,' might have to wait for some parts of their rations until the expected convoys should make good their difficult way from the port to the Chersonese Heights; and a soldier marched off in the evening for duty in the trenches might either have to take with him meat in an uncooked state, or else be forced to content himself with his biscuit and his allowance of rum.

Effect of the hurricane upon the plan of having reserves of food in camp.

Men accustomed to the transactions of war as conducted in the stern old times, may smile at the notion of encouraging or enduring complaint when they learn that, despite the accumulation of misfortunes which made havoc with the means of land-transport, there was no default, after all, in the supply of ammunition or biscuit; and their scorn would be wholesome enough if the time to which it applied were one of short duration, but it must be remembered that the trials of our soldiery on the Chersonese were destined to last throughout a hard winter-time, and that numbers of things which in other campaigns might fairly be counted as 'luxuries,' were, in this one, essential to life.

Deficiencies in the issue of supplies.

Considering the enormous difficulties of the land-

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transport it will probably be judged that the deficiencies occurring in the issue of provisions to our troops were surprisingly small;* but it must be remembered that in the momentous business of supplying food to our army before Sebastopol, mere delay, although not long protracted, was calculated to imperil health, and the more so because, as we saw, it too often prevented our men from having their meat-rations cooked before the evening hour when they had to march off for the trenches.

If the deficiencies that occurred in the issue of rations were upon the whole very small, they also, we know, were partial, there being some regiments, nay, even some brigades, nay, even again, some divisions, which received their provisions in full; and the truth indeed is that the deficiencies, when they occurred, did not generally result altogether from default of the hand undertaking to furnish supplies, but rather from failure of the arm—the wearied, overtasked arm—which did not stretch out to receive them. It is upon the exertions of the men themselves that the task of providing for their wants must always in part depend. 'Fleets of vessels may be freighted, and thou-'sands of animals laden with supplies, but it is the 'labour of the soldier applied to fatigue duty or extra 'work which must be more or less relied upon for 'achieving the last stage of the process;' † and the power to command this resource, the power to do what work might be needed for the acceptance of approach-

* The deficiencies are shown in the Appendix.

† Address of the Quartermaster-General, pp. 52, 53.

ing supplies—this was far from being uniformly present in the divisions, the brigades, the regiments which constituted our army. The capacity, the force of will, the personal ascendancy of officers commanding these several bodies of men, the zeal, the judgment, the ability of the assistant commissary allowed to each division, the comparative number of men left in camp who might not be so prostrated by fatigue or sickness as to be incapable of hard bodily exertion,—all these and perhaps many more were the varying conditions under which it resulted that deficiencies occurring in some parts of our camp were from other parts of it wholly averted.*

The sailors camped on the Chersonese.

Where results depended upon a man's power of helping himself, upon energy, upon determination, upon resource of mind, and upon bodily activity, it may well be believed that our sailors lying out on the Chersonese would not be easily conquered. More or less communistic perhaps in their notion of the use that might be made of stray horses belonging to unknown landsmen, they at all events compassed in some way the task of bringing up their supplies, kept off Want from their camp, and by a high, joyous courage, by skill, by what men call 'handiness,' made

* As an instance of the great extent to which the comfort of a whole division might be considered dependent upon its assistant commissary, I may mention that to this day I hear the zeal and ability of Mr Power spoken of with grateful recognition by officers of the 2d Division. I have chanced to hear this praise and this gratitude often expressed in reference to Mr Power, but I am far from wishing to mention his name invidiously, and do not for a moment question that a like recognition was fairly earned by other officers of the department.

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the best of the ugly conditions under which in this 'lubberly' struggle—for so of course they would call it—they had to fight, and to live. .

Defective cookery:

One of the many evils resulting from the over-tasked soldier's weariness was his indisposition to exert himself in collecting fuel, and cooking the meat supplied. Sometimes, if he had fuel ready, he boiled the salt meat in a mess-tin—a vessel not holding water enough for the due extraction of salt—and the

Its effect on the health of the men.

product of his feeble cookery was—not simply unwholesome, but, in a sense, almost poisonous; for a man taking such food constantly, without counteracting it by lime-juice, fresh vegetables, or some other fitting antidote, was too surely mingling with his blood the germs of scurvy. Very often indeed the weary soldier omitted the task of cookery altogether, throwing away his salt beef, or making it a subject of barter with the French, and eating his salt pork raw; but his health all this while was so constantly assailed by exposure to cold and wet that, for his life's sake, as a means of counteraction, he needed a generous diet; and accordingly, whether depriving himself of nourishment or taking food in an uncooked or ill-cooked state, he in either case made his body an easy prey to disease.

Impossibility of hauling up the timber for huts.

If the failure of our land-transport power impeded the supply of provisions, it caused a load of evils yet greater by arresting the completion of Lord Raglan's measures for hutting his troops, and by even for some time obstructing him in his endeavours to

furnish the men with new blankets and means of warm clothing.

We saw how promptly his efforts to obtain the timber and other materials required for the construction of huts, and also great supplies of warm clothing, were rewarded by the arrival and landing of the goods he had sought to import;* but the state of the land-transport, then perishing almost in its efforts to supply each day's food, made it utterly impossible as yet to haul up the loads of timber-planks required for giving to our troops the shelter of wooden buildings.

The warm clothing.

So far as concerns the warm clothing with which to brave a winter, the condition of things was this: Before the 1st of December, there had been accumulated in the port of Balaclava a great quantity—and indeed it would seem an abundance—of not only blankets, but watch-coats and flannels and woollen fabrics already made up into jackets, waistcoats, drawers, stockings, socks, into all the shapes judged to be the best for enabling the soldier to keep himself warm both during his turn of duty and whilst reposing in camp; but to exert the transport power required for bringing up the treasures thus imported from our harbour to our camp—this was more than the hampered Commissariat could for the moment achieve, and it consequently resulted that the power of the regiments to get full possession of the blessings prepared for them became dependent upon their

* By his despatch of Colonel Wetherall to Constantinople, *ante*, p. 165 *et seq.*

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will and their power to fetch the gift awaiting them at a distance of several miles. Where it happened that a regiment was under a vigorous commander, and had with it a fair number of bât horses and horses belonging to officers, the acquisition of the needed blankets and warm clothing was soon effected. Thus, for instance, the 7th Royal Fusiliers was one of the regiments encamped before Sebastopol at a distance of seven or eight miles from Balaclava; but Colonel Yea was a man of great energy, and took good care that the crippled state of the transport-service provided by the Commissariat should not prevent his regiment from having the blankets and coats which awaited it in the neighbouring port. He made his requisition, he had it approved, he collected the bât horses of the regiment, he laid an embargo upon the horses of his officers, and finally, out of that remnant of the corps which was not for the moment engaged in outpost duty or in the trenches, he drew men enough for his purpose.* By these means he formed a land-transport force which moved no doubt with infinite toil and difficulty, but still with ultimate success through miles of tenacious clay, and at length brought up into camp the needed supplies of warm clothing. By some of our other regiments the like was promptly done, but not by all; for the regiments of the 4th Division had not with them the

* I believe it was only after a struggle with the Adjutant-General that Yea obtained leave thus to employ the men. Estcourt, acting as the apportioner of the soldier's tasks, sought to protect him from overwork, whilst Yea was seeking to protect him from the cold.

bât horses which formed a main part of Colonel Yea's resources. And again, so fixed was the habit of looking to the Commissariat authorities for the delivery of expected stores that it could not be easily shaken off by a narrowly regulated mind; and many an officer, as was natural, proved less swift than others to see that, by evoking the energies and the resources of the regiment itself, he must try to make good the shortcomings of a hampered department. Whether owing to this stress of habit, or caused by some misunderstanding, or by the paralysing effect of cold and privation, many regiments were slow, very slow, to appropriate the warm clothing provided for them. Thus—to choose only two out of several like examples—there was a cavalry regiment which obtained an order for 108 blankets on the 2d of December, yet apparently did not fetch away any of them until the middle of January; and an infantry regiment which had obtained an order for 400 blankets on the 2d of December, fetched none of them until the 17th, and then took only 300.

Upon the whole, then, to sum up our statement, Lord Raglan's prompt measures for replacing the enormous losses occasioned by the wreck of the Prince proved so quickly effectual, that after the first week in December there was always at Balaclava a supply of warm clothing; but on the other hand, it is equally true that at that very time, and from the causes already assigned, there were regiments engaged before Sebastopol which lay suffering acute-

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ly from the want of those very articles which lay in readiness for them at a distance of seven or eight miles.*

Carcases of horses left above ground for want of hands to bury them.

If our soldiery were so hardly overtasked as to be scarce able to give themselves the advantages of the food that they had, it may well be imagined that the task of keeping pure the English part of the Chersonese, by freeing it from corrupt substances, would of necessity be neglected; and accordingly, on the heights at many a spot there lay the putrefying bodies of horses which had died under the toil of bringing up supplies for our army, and still lay where they fell for want of 'hands' to bury them; whilst even in the precincts of our camps filth at one time began to get the better of human energy.

The extreme limit reached by Lord Raglan in exacting work from his troops.

This distressing condition of things compelled Lord Raglan to fix and acknowledge the limit of his power to wring work from his soldiery. He gave an impulsion which brought about what was physically possible in the way of bringing back cleanliness to the actual precincts of our camps, but found himself obliged to confess that that was the last and utmost toil that he could exact from the weary soldier. Of course, if only for health's sake, it was vehemently to be desired that the bodies of dead animals on the Chersonese, whether quite close or not to our tents, should cease to be tainting the air; but Lord Raglan had to own that (for want of men not already tasked to the utmost by other and even more needful objects) he

* Address of the Quartermaster-General, p. 149.

needs must forego an object which seemed to him one of great moment.* CHAP. VIII.

The severity of the predicament resulting from want of 'hands' is well shown by this assignment of a limit which Lord Raglan for the time could not pass. As in the instance of our vain endeavour to 'metal' the road, so also for this less momentous though still important object of purifying the Chersonese Heights, Lord Raglan could not order the immediate execution of the work without either abandoning siege operations, or extorting aid from the French, because to attempt to do so would have been to draw further than ever upon the labouring power of the soldier, a resource already strained to the very utmost. Whilst already one man was doing the work of three, it would have been either vain or cruel to give an order importing that he must thenceforth achieve even more, and do the work of four, five, or six.†

Sufferings endured by our troops.

It was with these extraneous causes of evil to aggravate their lot that our troops 'were exposed 'under single canvas to all the sufferings and in-'conveniences of cold, rain, mud, and snow on high ground and in the depth of winter.'‡ The Allied armies were spared from that access of true Russian winter which sometimes obtains for a week or two in the Tauric peninsula; but still the cold endured by our men proved at times so intense that numbers

* Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle.
† Address of the Quartermaster-General.
‡ Seb. Comm., 5th Rep., p. 24.

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were stricken with frost-bite. It is true that with many, the circulation of the blood through the feet was in a state artificially checked; for amongst the errors committed at home for want of a real War Department, there was one that perversely co-operated with the rigours of winter. At those hours—too rarely occurring—when the soldier might lie down and seek rest, it oftentimes happened that he dared not take off his boots because the London Office supplying them had willed that they should be tight, and he feared that, if once removed, they could hardly again be put on. The same cause, it seems, often induced him to conceal incipient symptoms of frost-bite by denying, when medically questioned, that he had any sense of numbness in his feet.

The evils afflicting our camp kept on acting and reacting on each other with a baneful effect; for, because suffering wet and cold, and because deprived of due rest by an excessive burthen of duties, the soldier more than ever required both wholesome and generous food, yet—benumbed and tired out under stress of those very hardships which had made him greatly need such a diet—he too often shunned the toil necessary for grubbing up fuel and duly preparing his ration. And again, since the animal food issued out to him during the winter was for the most part salt meat, his health became dependent upon a supply of those other aliments which alone under such conditions could secure him from the inroads of scurvy; yet such antidotes (in sufficient

abundance) not having been brought up to camp, though sometimes they might be found at the port, his great weariness here entered once more into the compound of evil, for it prevented his seizing the occasions which now and then offered him vegetables, if only he would go down and fetch them; and again—pursuing him round in the same vicious circle—his weakness and incipient disease, resulting from want of apt food, made him every day less and less able to bear the cold and fatigue with which his troubles began.

Sickness of our army.

Under all the existing conditions, it was from no mysterious cause, but conformably to the known ways of Nature, that our army became afflicted with scurvy, and besides with several maladies, ranging under their own special names, yet disclosing by recognised symptoms the fell scorbutic taint.

Worn down by hard toil, numbed and lowered by cold and wet, suffering under wants so pernicious as to be too surely followed by scurvy, and assailed too by cholerine, by true cholera, by dysentery, by fevers, and by numberless other complaints, our army underwent day by day appalling deductions from strength; and, when once men fell sick, there awaited them, unless rescued by death, the unspeakable sufferings of the field-hospital, of the journey from camp to port, of the embarkation, and besides of those latter and yet more horrible miseries, of which we shall soon have to speak.

The whole number of our officers disabled by battle or sickness soon became very great, and in some

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regiments but few remained. The Royal Fusiliers at one time had only three officers left. But it was amongst the rank and file that sickness most destructively raged.

Throughout November, throughout December and January, our troops were passing into the sick-list with an always increasing rapidity;* and even in February, when Lord Raglan with great joy observed the bright looks of his men under arms, this sign of a change for the better seemed at first to receive contradiction from the figures of the 'morning state.' On the last day of February our army, out of a mean strength of 30,919 for the month, had lying in hospital no less than 13,608 men;† and even that immense number is utterly insufficient to measure the evil which it partly disclosed. Between the beginning of November‡ and the end of the day of which we are speaking—that is, the 28th of February, our soldiers perished in hospital to the number of 8898; and accordingly, it may be said that Death—only Death—kept down to its actual limit the before-given number of 13,608, and prevented it from reaching to 22,506; for that last would have been the number in

* The sick were :—

In the last week of November, . . .	7677
„ „ of December, . . .	9259
„ „ of January, . . .	12,405

—Papers, p. 16.

† Against 13,022 on the last of January.

‡ I choose this date because the subject I am treating is that of the winter misfortunes, and the date of the 1st of November would nearly enough coincide with the beginning of the changeful, wet, wintery weather.

our hospitals at the close of February, if the patients there treated during the period of the same four months had all remained alive in their wards. Putting into yet other words the same ugly truth, one may say that our army on that last day of February had lying in hospital beds, or else in new hospital graves, dug all of them within the four months, a number of sick and dead together amounting to 22,506, the number before assigned. Far from showing an increase in February of the numbers of men fit for duty, the 'morning states' confessed a falling off of more than 2000—for the 'effectives' at the end of January were 19,371, and at the end of February only 17,311. Nor was even this very small number sufficiently small to indicate the real extent of the force which could be used against the enemy in any coming fight for existence; because many of the troops it comprised were absent—of necessity absent—from the probable field of conflict, and our cavalry—for the most part dismounted—was nearly of course without power.

When considering what means he had left him for maintaining day and night all his siege-works in front of Sebastopol, for helping to cover the siege, and finally, for sustaining, if challenged, the weight of fresh Inkerman onslaughts, Lord Raglan used to look at the strength of his faithful workers of miracle—his infantry rank and file under arms; and such of these as in January lay gathered 'before Sebastopol' were only 11,367 *—a force which, after providing for

* The return giving this number does not include the Highland

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the absolutely indispensable duties of maintaining his part in the siege, would leave him with only four, or perhaps only three thousand men upon whom he would have to rely for the exigencies of any new Inkerman.

From time to time, at this period, reinforcements were landing at Balaclava, yet unhappily did not effect a proportionate and sustained augmentation of the number of men under arms; for the new-comers, all at once subjected to the hardships of this winter campaign, fell sick with appalling rapidity, so that even within a few days, the fresh body of troops became rather a superadded assemblage of hospital sufferers than an actual accession to strength. After disembarking at Balaclava, the 9th Regiment at once marched up to the camp awaiting it on the Chersonese Heights; but there sickened so fast, that of men fit for duty after only a few days of campaigning, it had only a small remnant left. The Guards had received some strong draughts of men sent out fresh from England; yet, when January came to an end, the three battalions, which lately had constituted a splendid brigade, could only muster for duty some 312 men.* The main body of the Scots Fusiliers, comprising at the time seven companies, was assembled one day with all its effective strength to greet the return of its colonel, and the whole force thus turned out to

Brigade, or any of the few other men who, because stationed at Balaclava, were not 'before Sebastopol or elsewhere away from the Chersonese.'

* Seb. Comm. Rep., 3414.

welcome him consisted of about 78 men.* The 63d Regiment may almost be said to have disappeared.† CHAP. VIII.

Thus what seemed to be threatened was—not simply the weakening but—the virtual extinction of our army. In proportion to numbers, the English army was undergoing at one time a fiercer havoc than that which ravaged London in the days of the great plague; but no awe like the awe of a city that is silenced by plague possessed the English camp. The camp, it is true, was quiet, but the silence maintained by our soldiery was the silence of weariness, the silence of men bearing cold and hardships of all kinds with obstinate pride. The time would seem one when, if ever, the strains of martial music might have had an unspeakable worth; but—unless when now and then wafted towards them by a breeze from the lines of the French—it was long since any such sound had cheered the hearts of our people.‡ Without extraneous aid men found strength, it would seem, in their own heroic qualities, found strength in that soldierly pride which forbids outward signs disclosing self-pity or despair; and it is not indeed even certain that such of them as remained for the moment unstricken by illness were at all in a mournful humour. They imagined that the siege going on portended a not distant result; and according to the judgment of one who

* Statement by Colonel Walker.

† Out of an original strength of more than a thousand, there only, it seems, remained thirty.

‡ The want of an ambulance corps had driven our people, as we saw, to the makeshift of employing the bandsmen to attend the sick and the wounded.

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well understood them, their spirit was sustained by a belief that they would soon be breaking into Sebastopol.

Even of the 11,000 men on the Chersonese still able to handle a firelock and keep their names out of the sick-list, it must not be imagined that all, or even perhaps a great part, were free from grave, bodily ailment; for there reigned in this suffering army so noble a spirit that many, though ill, refused to increase the labours of their comrades by going into hospital. And besides, though the soldier would by entering the sick-list obtain remission of labour, and might hope to derive good from fresh meat and from medical aid, he still could not but know that in the noisome field-hospital no less than in his own tent, he would be lying under single canvas upon the bare earth, or at best upon a bush or an armful of brushwood that had been cut down to form a rude bed, with still only one blanket to shield him from the rigours of winter, and enduring besides all the misery of being one in a closely ranged layer of sick or wounded men with scarce any of the appliances needed for decent hospital service.

The fortitude of our army.

All their hardships—hardships too often fatal—our officers and men endured with a heroism, as the Sebastopol Committee declared, 'unsurpassed in the 'annals of war;' and in truth the contented devotion of the men under these cruel trials was such as to appear almost preternatural in the eyes of one who measures self-sacrifice by a merely civilian standard. Incredible as the statement may seem, there

is yet ground for saying, though of course, in only general terms, that the men did not choose to complain of the privations and hardships under which they were suffering. It is remembered indeed that once they showed indignant displeasure, but the feeling in that instance sprang from what was a purely unselfish, nay, even delicate sentiment. An order had been issued directing that the blanket in which a dead soldier lay wrapt when carried to the edge of his grave should be removed from his body before consigning it to earth, and that measure our men disapproved. In the midst of their own bodily sufferings, they condemned what they thought a slight to the remains of their departed comrades.

The true soldier, or 'paid-man,' as distinguished from the one raised by conscription, is indeed a man governed by feelings and convictions which at first sight appear strangely different from those of other human beings. Upon the humble rights that he has acquired by entering the army he insists with a curious tenacity; but as regards the other side of his wild, romantic bargain, he performs it with unstinting readiness, paying down his vast stake, his freedom, his ease, his strength, his health, his life, as though it were nothing worth. Lord Raglan, when visiting the field-hospitals, used to ask upon entering each tent whether any of the men there collected had any complaints to make; and then it commonly happened that one of the sufferers answered by firmly alleging a grievance, but a grievance, strange to say, unconnected with the privations then threaten-

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ing his very life, a grievance based in general upon some question of 'stoppages,' and always concerning money. Thereupon Lord Raglan would promise that the question raised should be considered, and his attendant aide-de-camp (who on these occasions was generally Colonel Nigel Kingscote) used then to make a careful note of the complaint. This process was repeated until all the complaints had been heard; but invariably they related to money questions.

No man ever used to say: 'My Lord, you see how 'I am lying wet and cold, with only this one blanket 'to serve me for bed and covering. The doctors are 'wonderfully kind, but they have not the medicines, 'nor the wine, nor any of the comforting things they 'would like to be giving me. If only I had another 'blanket, I think perhaps I might live.' Such words would have been true to the letter, and also, I imagine, appropriate in the judgment of almost any civilian; but the soldier was not the man who would deign to utter them. He would hold the State fast to its bargain in respect to those pence that were promised him through the lips of the recruiting sergeant; but, on the other hand, he seemed to acknowledge that he had committed his bodily welfare no less than his life to the chances of war, and would let the Queen have what he sold her without a grudging word. Sometimes the brave men—I speak now of the men under arms—would do more than acquiesce in their sufferings, and—detecting perhaps a shadow of care in the face of their honoured chief when he rode past their camp—would seize any occasion that offered for

showing him that they were content. Thus, for instance, when asked by Lord Raglan whether his regiment had obtained its warm clothing, a soldier would not merely say 'yes,' but gratefully and cheerily add that that 'was all they wanted.'*

Yet from such indications as these it would be a mistake to infer that the hardships our people endured might perhaps have been less, after all, than this narrative would make them appear. What such instances really show is that, great as were the sufferings of the men, their spirit proved greater still.

Lord Raglan at this period.

If the soldier had to endure grievous hardships and bodily sufferings, his general's portion was—Care—Care almost unceasing, yet repressed or concealed, so far as was possible, by a characteristic abhorrence of down-heartedness, and in conformity also with that military policy of which we shall soon have to speak. Our men of course knew but little of the ugly statistics which were ceaselessly measuring the calamity, dividing the dead from the living, revealing the number of those who lay wounded or sick in the hospitals, and sorting out hour by hour the lessening remnant of strength; but to Lord Raglan every day of his life, and 'with dreadful exactness, the "morning state" told all.'† With the absolute hideous truth thus day by day spread out before him, he did not for a moment deceive himself by observing that

* The instance alluded to was that of an answer given to Lord Raglan by a soldier of the 1st Battalion of Rifles, and that battalion was one attached to the 4th Division—the very division that suffered the most.

† The Quartermaster-General before the Chelsea Board, p. 171.

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no man complained. On the contrary, his visits to the divisional camps and field-hospitals impressed him more and more painfully with the extent of the sufferings endured. In his way of making these visits he neglected — what sometimes is of use, though distasteful to an honest man's nature—he neglected the ostentation of care. He used to ride almost always with but a single aide-de-camp; and, it chancing that the wrapper he wore in those days had so much of the cloak formation as to conceal his loss of an arm, he was but little observed in passing, and not often recognised.* It was in general by work —continuous work at his desk—that he obtained such distraction from grief as made endurance possible; and this kind of toil must have been the more welcome to him, because his rare capacity for official work, combined with minute and accurate knowledge of all the many subjects he dealt with, enabled him to feel that he was not only labouring for the weal of his army, but labouring always in a right direction. In the whole multitude of the despatches and letters, general orders, specific directions, memoranda, remonstrances, and minutes that he penned at this time, there is not, I think, to be found one ill-aimed appeal, one random or misapplied word, one statement disclosing confusion or obscurity in the mind of the writer. Every sentence flies straight to its purpose and seems exactly apt.

Interrupted of course in the early morning and

* The outer coat was one thoughtfully sent him from Vienna by Lady Westmoreland.

during the day-time by other numberless duties, he recurred when he could to the desk, there commonly pursuing his labours deep into the night; and even when at last he had gone to his bed, he too often continued to let his mind work, calling out through the wooden partition which divided his room from the cabin of the Quartermaster-General, and from time to time consulting with him upon some newly-occurring thought concerning the state of his troops.

There was one night, however, at last when care pressed so heavily on him that, perceiving his power of bodily endurance to be for the moment endangered by the strain of importunate thought, he got up and went to the door of Mr Odo Russell (who had lately come up to headquarters from our Embassy at Constantinople), and confessing himself unwell, asked his guest to come and talk to him for a while. The conversation that followed turned on all sorts of subjects except those connected with the campaign (which were purposely excluded), and at length Lord Raglan, saying that he felt much better, dismissed Mr Odo Russell with cordial thanks, and again sought the needed sleep. So far as I have learnt, this is the only instance in which Lord Raglan allowed it to appear that his power of enduring care was undergoing a strain.

Nature of the complaints under which our army was suffering.

The huge number of troops in our sick-lists comprised soldiers wounded in action, and those, too, who were victims to cholera, and other ills, hardly avertible by even the most careful War Ministry; but it is nevertheless very certain that the bulk of our

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hospital inmates were men stricken down by those maladies which science traces to hardships—that is, to cold, and to wet, and to excessive fatigue, and to want of the kinds of food necessary for maintaining health and strength when camping out on a hill-top throughout a Crim-Tartary winter.* Of the maladies causing 48,742 admissions into hospital, nearly three-fourths were of the kind which science ranks as 'Zymotic,' and declares to be, in some sense, 'preventable.'†

Removal of the sick.

When our sick were carried down for embarkation to the port of Balaclava, they too often endured long delays and consequent sufferings, which, however, perhaps in most instances, could be traced to want of 'hands' and want of space—in short, to a sort of adversity which may fairly be called 'stress of war.' But when once they had been brought on board ship, they not only there found a home secure against hostile disturbance, but were also so circumstanced as to be more directly than before in charge of our Home Government. Yet, unhappily, with these seeming advantages, they fared worse than ever. No adequate provision had been made for removing them in vessels which were either sufficiently spacious, or aptly equipped for the purpose; and although they had only to traverse a distance of some 300 miles, the privations and hardships they endured whilst making the passage proved often such a cruel addition to their original sufferings that, during the months of

Their sufferings on board the sick-transports.

* See note on this subject in the Appendix.

† See, however, on this point the above-mentioned Appendix note.

December and January respectively, they died, and were thrown overboard in the proportions of, first, 85, and then 90, for every thousand.* CHAP. VIII.

Each survivor, when landed, encountered delays on the beach which too often proved long and cruel; yet, if brought up at last—still alive—to the entrance of one of our Levantine hospitals, the patient might venture to trust that he had reached the end of those sufferings which human aid could avert; but, unhappily, all such fond conjectures were destined to be turned to naught by the paramount defaults before indicated—by defaults at the seat of Government, which left the whole task of both organising and maintaining these complex establishments to either no one at all, or else to men only half armed with the kind of authority needed. Our hospitals in the Levant.

From the causes already assigned, it resulted that (apart from those evils which engineers only could meet) the internal administration of our Levantine hospitals was cursed by several heinous defects—by frightful overcrowding, by want of due ventilation, by an appalling want of cleanliness, by want of sufficient attendance, by want of hospital comforts, and finally, by want of proper food, rightly cooked and supplied at right times.

Therefore, what the stricken soldier encountered when entering the haven prepared for him by rich,

* Occurring within the period occupied by a voyage of only about 300 miles, this, of course, was an enormous rate of mortality. The average of deaths on board during four months and a half was 74 per thousand. Afterwards there was a sudden, rapid, and sustained improvement.

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clumsy, improvident England, was not only a fresh access of misery, too often followed by death, but misery and death brought about by a sort of causation which his country, if acting with prudence and unhampered by its system of polity, could hardly have failed to arrest. How angels descended upon these scenes of wretchedness, and—within the sphere of their mission—turned evil at last into good, we shall by-and-by not fail to see. But they had not at once their reward in the improving state of the sufferers, or the lessened amount of mortality; for poisons—deadly poisons—were rife, which could not be killed or averted by the excellence of the internal management; and indeed the brave effort, though comforting—beyond measure comforting—to our prostrate soldiers, was so ill-requited at first by success in the strife against Death, as to seem but little less desperate than trying to shut out wet from the cabin of a sinking ship; for against gentle care and toil at the bedsides of patients, the rank poisons had overwhelming, had paramount strength, and were only destined to yield when attacked by the skilled engineer with his train of hard-handed workmen.

Till assailants of that kind proved able to destroy the true homes of disease, lapse of time passing under conditions which suffered the malign germs to grow, and besides, the added numbers upon numbers of wounded and sick again and again and again brought crowding into the hospitals, gave continually more and more strength to the poisons at work; and thus it resulted that, concurrently with the march of

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improvement in all that observers could see when passing through wards and corridors, the rate of death to the hundred on the number of cases treated rose every month higher and higher.* From 8 per cent upon the cases treated in the four weeks which ended on the 11th of November, it rose in the next four weeks to 15; in the next, to 17; in the next, to 32; and in the next (the four weeks of February 1855), to the enormous proportion of 42 per cent;† and in the Kululi hospital during those four weeks, the number of deaths proved so great as to equal more than one-half of the number of cases treated, being 52 in the hundred.‡

Mortality in the hospitals on the Bosphorus.

During a period of only seven months from the 1st of October 1854 to the end of April 1855, and out of an average strength of only 28,939, there perished in our hospitals, or on board our invalid-transport ships, 11,652 men,§ of whom 10,053 died from sickness alone;‖ and of the maladies causing all this mortality, the proportion which ranges under the head of 'Zymotic'¶ was so transcendently great that

The deaths that took place in our hospitals.

* For comparison with the figures about to be stated, it may be convenient to say that, according to the Registrar-General's Returns for 1851, the percentage of deaths to cases treated was :—

In eleven London general hospitals, . . .	7.6
Fever hospital, ...	11.3
Military and naval hospitals in London, . .	2.4

† Papers presented to War Department.—Preface to Section III., p. xxviii. Stated more exactly, with their appendant fractions, the above numbers are : 8.5, 15.5, 17.9, 32.1, and 42.7.

‡ Ibid. § Table in p. 320 of Papers quoted *ante*.

‖ Ibid. Unnumbered page following p. 12.

¶ As to the consequences which science likes to draw from proving maladies to be 'Zymotic,' see *ante*, p. 212, and a Paper on this subject in the Appendix.

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Science in some of her moods has computed it at even nine-tenths.

Strict comparison impracticable between the effect of the winter on the French and on the English army.

For the purpose of any comparison worked out into figures between the effect of the winter on the French, and its effect on the English army, there is no sufficient basis in the existing statistics. It was only by reinforcements that either the French or the English army was saved from extinction; and the question asking which of the two would have perished the first, if no succour at all had come, is one that can hardly be answered by any arithmetical proofs.

Recapitulation.

The calamities we have had to record were in great part the too sure result of a tardily commenced undertaking to winter on the Chersonese Heights; and the plague of the cholera, no less than the devastating hurricane of the 14th of November, was, after all, a natural visitation which could not have been warded off by any human foresight or skill; but there supervened other misfortunes which were not of such kind as to be necessarily resultant from the military operation.

Of those supervening misfortunes we have seen what the causes were:—

With the French, a cruel economy which provided for the soldier a scanty allowance of meat, and a miserable species of tent;

With the English, excessive toil, an interruption of the land-transport power resulting in many privations; and last, though in one sense predominant, that want of a real War Department which involved lesser wants unnumbered, carrying with it, amongst other

evils, a grievous inadequacy of the means provided by the State for watching over the health of an army and tending the sick and wounded.

How some of those causes of evil descended from causes more distant, we have not failed to see; and, upon the whole, if so one may speak, I have given what I thought the true pedigree of each detected mischief, doing this, not so much by the process of first pointing out a defect, and then tracing it to some hapless administrator, but rather by antecedently showing under what conditions it was that public servants undertook at short notice to winter troops on the Chersonese, and then coming down step by step to the actual result of their efforts.

It may seem that, under this method, the blame I impute falls but lightly—falls indeed with a weight ill-proportioned to the greatness of the calamity suffered; but the simple truth is, as I have shown, that the Monarchical part of our system had so cumbered the action of England as to prevent her from wearing the harness required for modern war; and of course, to show this was to destroy that presumption against public functionaries which miscarriage had seemed to warrant. After once exposing the cause which had not only kept our bureaucracies in a broken, dispersed condition, but even prevented this nation from having a real War Department, I found little else that deserved heavy, unsparing blame. Although furnished—nay, laden—with immensely abundant means of learning the truth, I saw no flagitious delinquencies, no huge, glaring, monstrous defaults

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which, in seeking to account for the miseries endured by our troops, could be honestly ascribed to any public functionaries, whether civil or military. What, rather, I saw, brought to light by the scrutiny applied to their conduct, was—not of course faultless judgments, not men of routine all at once striking valiantly out of their orbits, but—everywhere, a stainless integrity, with, in general, a high public spirit, much ability, a strong sense of duty, and energies rising to zeal under stress of adverse times.

It must be always understood that the mischiefs arising from official mismanagement brought about, after all, but a part of the winter calamity. Co-operating, as against the English soldier, with the yet graver hardship of excessive toil, those mischiefs, it is true, superadded a new load of suffering to that which must needs have resulted from a lengthening siege of Sebastopol not begun, nay, scarce even projected, until the month of October; yet the evil, the main evil, lay—not alone, and not even capitally in the want of better means for facing a rigorous winter, but—rather in the ugly predicament of having to winter at all without long antecedent preparation on bleak, open downs in Crim-Tartary; and accordingly, having now shown the causes which aggravated the hardships of the soldier, we may well lay a yet greater stress on that series of strategic counsels which brought him step by step from the Alma to his miserable tent on the Chersonese.

What share the French had in those counsels, and

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The strategic decisions which resulted in obliging the Allies to winter on the Chersonese Heights.

what share also Burgoyne, we sufficiently saw long ago; and in this place, without again separating the component forces of will which joined to bring about the result, I speak simply of the Anglo-French army as an aggregate bound up by alliance into a single unit of strength, with a strategy which, however originating, however compounded, was at all events so decisively accepted by the two Allied armies, that it led them, one along with the other, to take the course we have traced. Their chosen strategy led them to waste the priceless fruits of the Alma, to spare the 'North side' of Sebastopol, to abandon their conquest of almost the whole Crimea, to surrender to the enemy his all-precious line of communication, to give him back all those country resources—food, forage, shelter, and fuel — which armies commonly need, to abstain from attacking the south front of Sebastopol whilst it lay at their mercy, and wait until it grew strong, to undertake a slow engineer's conflict of pick-axe and spade and great guns against an enemy vastly stronger than themselves in that special kind of strife, to submit to be hemned in and confined by the beaten enemy, to let him drive them from the Woronzoff Road—the only metalled road that they had between the plain and our camp—to throw away the ascendant obtained by a second great victory, to see in the Inkerman day a reason for not pushing fortune, and then, finally, in the month of November — too late, of course, for due preparation — to accept the hard, perilous task of trying to live out through a winter on the corner

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of ground where they stood, there maintaining by day and by night a ceaseless strife with the enemy, but a yet harder strife with the elements. For each of those steps taken singly there was ready, of course, at the time some reason fatally specious, yet by all of them taken together, the Allies brought themselves to commit an enormous abdication of power, and condemned their suffering armies to the misery of this winter campaign.

In war, as all know, dire predicaments result oftentimes from defeat; but here, strange to say, it was by the joyous path of victory that the Allies went and placed themselves in that state of duress which forced them to meet the winter on a high, barren promontory, without even a hope of there keeping themselves alive unless by means brought them in ships from many and distant shores.

CHAPTER IX.

DEMEANOUR UNDER THESE TRIALS OF THE STATE, AND THE PEOPLE OF ENGLAND.

I.

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Critical state of the Allied army.

IGNORING or imperfectly recognising the now extreme weakness of the English army, General Canrobert still continued to dispose his troops in a way which left to our soldiers an inordinately large proportion of the common task; and this perverse mis-arrangement so augmented the danger of being largely outnumbered, that it is hard to see how the Allies in the month of December or the January of the following year could have held their ground on the Chersonese against a powerful, well-directed, and determined attack.

Yet they could not retreat. By their weakness, no less than by their pride, they were forbidden to raise the siege. To dismantle their batteries, to withdraw their siege-guns, their siege materials, their cavalry, their field-artillery, their infantry, their mountains of stores from the heights before Sebastopol to the edge of the sea; to embark all their strength, all their treasures of war on board numberless ships, and finally,

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to cover these operations from the assaults of an exultant enemy pouring down from the heights with horse, foot, and artillery missiles to make the retreat a disaster — all this must have been a desperate, not to say an impossible, task.

The expedient to which it resorted.

What, then, was the course to be taken by an army in this state of duress? Apart from the rejected expedient of averting an attack by at once breaking into Sebastopol, there was plainly nothing better to do than to stand firm and show a good countenance to the enemy until reinforcements should come. This plan had the advantage of harmonising with ulterior prospects; for at some future time, the continuance of siege operations might prove to be a real and useful advance towards what, for the present, was rather their ostensible object, and meanwhile would help to accomplish a purpose not only more pressing, but also of far deeper moment, namely, that of deterring the enemy during several weeks from any aggressive enterprise by putting him on his defence. And the plan was one of such kind that—because involving no change of measures, but only a change of the immediate purpose—it could be tacitly adopted at once without being preceded by the always anxious process of negotiating an agreement in words between General Canrobert and Lord Raglan.

Canrobert's means of showing a good countenance to the enemy.

For this expedient of showing a good countenance to the enemy, General Canrobert was well circumstanced; for, although he, no less than Lord Raglan, lay in danger of the grievous calamity that might

result from a Russian attack, he had strength enough, nevertheless, to become at almost any moment, if so he should choose, a powerful aggressor; and accordingly, by the vigour of his siege preparations—preparations carried on in true earnest—he of course could do a great deal towards masking the weakness of the whole Allied army. But to our people no such resource was open, for they had not at that time the means of causing their operations against Sebastopol to appear in a high degree formidable; and what virtually defended their lines was a thing unreal and shadowy, acting mainly on the imaginations of men —was, if so one may speak, the dread spectre of that victorious army which had met the Czar's strength on Mount Inkerman.

Lord Raglan's.

To keep a foe under this awe, it was essential of course that what remained of our army should seem to have an air of tranquillity, as though engaged day by day in the tedious work of a siege, without suffering under heavier cares; and it so happened that the qualities a general need have in order to produce this effect were almost matchlessly united in Lord Raglan; for being by nature both calm and sanguine, and having—almost to a foible—the habit of detecting a humourous element in the bearing of men overwrought by anxiety, he was blessed on the whole with a freedom from despondency so instinctive, so genuine, that to give his camp and his people the appearance of resolution and strength, he had only to obey the dictates of his own temperament, and was thus, in a measure, re-

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lieved from what would have been to him the irksome, unfitting task of trying to act a part.*

Danger arising from publicity.

But in his endeavour to fend off the enemy's hosts for the next few weeks by showing them a firm, assured countenance, Lord Raglan was in danger of being baffled by his own fellow-countrymen, nay, even by the Queen's Government, and this, too, with the aid of materials derived from himself; for unless he should venture to deviate audaciously from the ordinary course of duty, he by almost every mail must needs be sending home words which perhaps—spoken out of a whisper—might bring down the toppling avalanche.

And England was no place for State whispers. Publicity there reigned so largely that, if the Cabinet should once become horror-struck on perceiving the desperate plight of our troops, its alarm of a certainty before many hours would become the alarm of the people; and the electric wire straining in readiness to tell all London knew to St Petersburg, and through St Petersburg to the Russian Commander in the Crimea, there might soon be an end to the success of that shadowy, unsubstantial defence which consisted in seeming confident without the support of real strength. Under such conditions, how was

* One of the expedients for masking the weakness of our people from the enemy's penetration is thus mentioned by Colonel Steevens: 'The 'detail in orders for the trench and picket duties was always by com-'panies, not numerically; this was done, I understand, with a view to 'mislead the Russians about the actual strength of the trench guards, '&c., in case they might, through spies, procure any intelligence about 'the daily detail.'—Crimean Campaign with the Connaught Rangers.

Lord Raglan to conduct his correspondence with the Home Government? Was he to conceal from them the grievous truth, or for honour's sake tell it them frankly, and so venture to apprise the enemy of the desperate state of weakness to which his army had been reduced?

My belief is that in this dilemma, Lord Raglan did not consciously formulate for himself any settled design, and that the spirit and general tenor of his correspondence with the Home Government resulted quite naturally from, on the one hand, his determination to conceal no material facts, and on the other, from an inborn antagonism to the feelings, the impulses, and the language of alarmists which allied itself in his mind with a wise and wholesome desire to encourage rather than frighten the Queen's Ministers—men engaged, he well knew, as he was himself, in doing all that was possible for his suffering, dwindling army. But whether he followed a plan, or was only (as I have imagined) pursuing the path of strict duty and obeying his natural feelings, the course he adopted was this: Upon all matters touching the state and prospects of his troops, their numbers, their losses, their health, their supplies, their wants, and the means of meeting them, his communications to the Home Government were so constant, so full, so accurate, so clear in their general statements, so precise in their more minute details, that (along with the enclosed 'morning states,' to which he was continually invoking attention) they formed a complete repertory of all that a Minister in London, who was

Character of Lord Raglan's correspondence with the Home Government.

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labouring for the welfare of our army, could usefully wish to know. But when thus for duty's sake charging himself to impart mournful truths, he certainly did not break out into much lamentation; and, on the contrary, after showing, if he could, any circumstances of a more hopeful sort than those with which he had dealt, he liked to add a short sentence which, although of course kept, and kept strictly within the limits of truth, was still so buoyantly worded that, when coming under the eyes of an ardent and hopeful reader, it might tend to chase away gloom occasioned by ugly tidings. When, for instance, he imparts a dire fact, carrying with it a world of misfortune, and says: 'The roads are in a dreadful 'state, not only on the Ridge, but on the way to Bala-'clava, and the passage of wheels, if the carriage be 'loaded, is next to impossible,' he immediately adds: 'Everybody is as busy as a bee in and in the neigh-'bourhood of Balaclava, and efforts are making to 'get stores up by men and horses,' thus using such words that, by the subtle power of language gliding in alongside of harsh facts, they somehow picture a scene of animated, successful labour.

Effect of the despatches upon the mind of the Duke of Newcastle.

And the Duke of Newcastle (the recipient of the despatches thus framed), was not so statistically minded as to have the habit of separating plain statements of fact from the adjacent language. Far from being a soldier who slept, as Napoleon did, with the 'morning states' under his pillow, he seems not to have schooled himself into a due appreciation of tidings conveyed by dry words and figures. Accus-

tomed himself to express patriotic emotions in ample, well-rounded sentences, he hardly, I think, understood that a general's despatch, though containing no tragic language, might still be reporting a tragedy; and thus the hard facts imparted to him in the despatches received from Headquarters failed to take such a hold upon his mind as to prevent him from being influenced by the cheering tone of the writer. So, upon the whole, it resulted that the communications thus penned, and thus read, brought about two wholesome results which might seem at first sight to be incompatible with each other; for the Secretary of State had before him all the sinister facts, and yet did not take the alarm which those very facts seemed to warrant. He was so amply and so promptly apprised of all those needs of our army which resulted from its unforeseen state of duress, that he could endeavour towards meeting them without an hour's delay, and escape, nevertheless, for a time that overweening anxiety which—by processes already explained—might have made him a link in the chain for conveying precious knowledge to Russia—knowledge apt for inciting her to seize the ready occasion, and bring the weight of gross numbers against what remained of our soldiery.

Meeting and adjournment of Parliament.

Parliament met on the 12th of December, and a beginning of complaints on the subject of our war administration was heard before long in both Houses; but they adjourned on the 23d for the holidays without having as yet fully learnt the state of their far distant army.

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The nation steadfast.

The country, however, by this time was beginning to be wrung with concern for the fate of our suffering troops, now visibly nailed to the Chersonese, and there awaiting midwinter. Still, the growing alarm was a feeling kept within bounds, and wholly of such a complexion as to bring with it fresh strength of purpose. The nation proved steadfast; and amongst all those who sprang forward to execute its will at this time, a place of honour belongs to numbers of youths and young men, for the most part humble in station, yet abler, more willing, than others to bring their country new strength.

Impulse given to recruiting by the accounts of Inkerman.

Accounts that told—even though dimly—of the hard, close fighting at Inkerman proved so enticing to youth, and to war-loving men in these isles, that more eagerly, and in more ample numbers than when Fortune's smile was all sunshine, they came—coming each, life in hand—to swell the list of recruits.

This impulsion seems the more interesting, when those who observe it remember that the battle was not one resulting in any great showy triumph, and did not even include that simple clenching of victory which is commonly effected by a pursuit of the beaten troops. It was for northern imaginations, and fancies nurtured in gloom, that the roar, the mist, the smoke, the man-to-man conflict at Inkerman, had a strangely alluring charm.

The counsels of the 'Times' at this period.

And, until the third week of December, the resolve of the country still found a genuine utterance in that same commanding voice which had moved the war out to Crim-Tartary.

We shall presently have to be speaking of the perils brought about by some letters from camp which were suffered to pass into print, and besides, of several other disclosures from time to time rashly made; but whilst guilty of such indiscretions, the conductors of the 'Times,' in their character as public advisers, maintained a high, warlike tone from the middle of the month of November down to even within a fortnight of the close of the year. No more able, more cogent appeals were perhaps ever made than those in which its great writers insisted again and again that the despatch of reinforcements must be achieved with an exertion of will strong enough to overthrow every obstacle interposed by mere customs and forms. When the story of 'Inkerman' reached them, they uttered, if so one may speak, the very soul of a nation enraptured with the hard-won victory, and abounding in gratitude to its distant army, yet disclosing the care, the grief, which sobered its joy and its pride. And again, when a few days later, the further accounts from our army showed the darkening of the prospect before it, the great journal using its leadership, and moving out to the front with opportune, resolute counsels, seemed clothed with a power to speak, nay, almost one may say to act, in the name of a united people. During nearly five weeks the 'Times' used its strength in the spirit of a patriot king, and seemed to reign with a courage that hardly could fail to hold good against the troubles of war.

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II.

Newspaper correspondents in the Crimea.

If the tone of Lord Raglan's despatches sustained the composure of the Home Government, and kept it for the time out of mischief, there were some of his fellow-countrymen near him whose marplot disclosures seemed likely to bring down, some day, a new onslaught of Russian masses against what remained of our troops; for observers in camp now announced the weakened state of our army, and their statements being published in London passed, thence with electric speed to enlighten and guide the enemy.

A free country busied in war against a great Power is apt to yearn after accounts of any momentous campaign with a longing that can scarce be resisted; and, it being almost a mockery to tell impatient enquirers that they must slake their thirst for war tidings with dry official reports, there is hardly any room for believing that intelligence of an informal kind flying homewards from camps and cantonments, can be effectually forbidden or stopped. If no other human agency were in readiness for obtaining truths, fables, and comments from the seat of war, there would always be open that source of intelligence which is to be found in the letters of critical and perhaps discontented officers, who, by virtue of the opinions they have formed of their own clear-sightedness and judgment, hold commissions to narrate what they gather from either observation or hearsay, or from the depths of their

own understandings, and to pronounce judgment more or less confidently upon the acts and omissions of the rulers, whether civil or military. Experience had proved that communications of this kind must needs find their way to England; and certainly under one aspect it was for the advantage of the public service that conceited, querulous officers should be deprived of their power to do mischief by the rivalry of professional narrators with more of the leisure required for taking a large field of view, and abler to wield the pen.*

Correspondents of London newspapers in the Crimea.

By narrators of this sort established in Balaclava, or encamped with our troops on the Chersonese, several great London newspapers were ably, nay, brilliantly served.

The modern war correspondent.

The bold, skilled, sagacious envoy whom the conductors of our modern newspapers despatch to a seat of war is a member of what now has become an interesting, chivalrous profession, with not only its recognised duties, but also a code of honour implying so much of the military spirit, that he who chooses to follow this venturesome calling is accus-

* In the early days of the war, the querulous letters from officers were so rife in England that the Duke of Newcastle becoming indignant, and even alarmed, imparted his disgust and anxiety to the commander abroad. Lord Raglan, in answer, observed that the same ugly symptom had disclosed itself at the time of the Peninsular war, and ascribed it to no really dangerous spirit of insubordination, but rather to that exercise of the Englishman's indefensible 'right to 'grumble,' which was to be expected at times when no active operations were going on. He said their letters would not do 'any real 'harm,' and reinforced the consolation thus offered by archly predicting that they would be eclipsed by 'our own correspondent.'—See quotation, *post*, from letter of 17th September 1854.

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tomed to hold himself in readiness for instant, unquestioning obedience when ordered off at short notice to meet toil, privation, and danger in any part of the world.* How successfully in the face of besetting difficulties such an envoy can plant himself upon the spot where light may be expected to fall, how he winnows away the fables surrounding him in the tumult of camps, and fastens upon the dim-looking truths, and gives them besides their significance, and sends them on their magic flight homewards—all this we admiringly know;† but we also know that, in general, he the better achieves these wonders because often, though not indeed always, he has found means of reconciling the duties of a trusted corre-

* A memorable example of this almost romantic fealty on the part of newspaper correspondents was given by Mr Henry Stanley, the great African discoverer. Without previous warning, he suddenly found himself summoned from Spain to Paris, and thence ordered to go off at once into the interior of Africa, and there find Livingstone! How brilliantly he obeyed the order, the world knows.

† In justice towards the great nation which I like to call 'English,' and sometimes refuse to call 'foreign,' I ought perhaps to acknowledge that the extraordinary triumphs of European journalism at the time of the Franco-German war of 1870-71 were due, in no slight degree, to the vigour, the sagacity, and the enterprise that were brought to bear on the objects from the other side of the Atlantic. The success of that 'partnership for the purpose of war news' which had been formed between one of our London newspapers and the 'New York Tribune' was an era in the journalism of Europe, though not in that of the United States, where the advance had an older date, deriving from their great civil war. I cannot speak of the 'New York Tribune' without thinking of one of its conquests achieved in another direction. Years ago, it established in London a kindly, highly-gifted correspondent, whose charming house has done more than the stateliest embassies could well have achieved towards dispersing old, narrow prejudices, and creating and maintaining goodwill, affection, and friendship between the two great English nations.

spondent with the duties of a trusted guest received, it may be, in the quarters of some more or less high commander, and of course bound to make no disclosures which might benefit the foes of his host.

But in the times of which I write, the then almost new calling of the 'war correspondent' was only beginning to find its destined place in the world, and no means had, as yet, been discovered for enabling him to fulfil his task, yet fulfil it in such a way as to run no risk of doing good to the enemy. Lord Raglan saw and frankly acknowledged the advantage that in one point of view might result from the communications of skilled correspondents whose writings, he thought, would outshine all the letters from wrong-headed officers;* but, as was natural, he retained in some measure the feeling with which his great master Wellington used always to think of the press. He felt what at first he mildly called the 'inconvenience' of unbridled communications from his camp to all the wide world, and could not deny that ill-directed strictures and unfounded attacks on men in authority must do harm; but when put to the touch, he proved, after all, a great deal more English than military in his ideas, and seems never to have harboured a thought of controlling public writers, whilst by counsel he even endeavoured to teach the Home Government patience. 'I am afraid,' he wrote, 'that these gentlemen [those he had before called "the gentlemen of the press"] will circulate many

* And drive them 'out of the market.'—Lord Raglan, private letter to Duke of Newcastle, 17th September 1854.

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'unfounded impressions, and exercise an undue 'and baleful influence on the public mind, however 'ill-informed they may be on the subjects which 'they discuss; but what cannot be cured must be 'endured, and we must make as light of the evil as 'we can, and pursue, notwithstanding their denun- 'ciations, the course which we may consider [it] 'our duty to follow. It appears to me that the 'only way to diminish the importance of correspon- 'dents is not to notice their reports unless, as in the 'present case, they become matters of discussion in 'Parliament.'*

We now see, I suppose, that it would have been well for Lord Raglan to choose decisively between two plans of action, and either send away all the newspaper correspondents established in the Crimea, or else give them his support and his favour under conditions that might secure to them the object they all had at heart, namely, that of being able to send home an abundance of interesting and accurate information without thereby running a risk of doing the least good to the enemy; but, as it was, he chose an intermediate course, allowing the correspondents to remain in camp, yet not so recognising their functions, and not so conciliating them personally as to be able to acquire a control, or even an influence over the tenor of their letters. So what happened was, that the correspondents, though living in camp, and drawing rations under Treasury orders, were not brought to

* Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle.—Private letter, 14th May 1854.

have even a bias in favour of authority;* and upon the anxious, the perilous question whether disclosures sent home might not do good to the enemy, they had to exercise their own unaided judgments. To determine such a question with safety to the interests of their country, they could scarcely be competent; for how was it possible that a writer not admitted into the counsels of General Canrobert and Lord Raglan, and receiving no guidance from the military authorities, could know with what facts, if any, he ought to supply the enemy by the London and St Petersburg route? Of all the thousand causes of wrong and irresolute counsels that hamper the action of a commander, there are hardly any more formidable than the interposed dimness which prevents his knowing with certainty the condition and plans of his adversaries; so that plainly to send him full tidings from the opposite camp, and to send them under a voucher which affords strong presumption of their truth, is to give him an advantage of almost priceless worth.

In transactions connected with that part of my subject which I have called 'the demeanour' of our people, Mr Russell, the 'Times' correspondent, was destined to take a great part. He was not at all one of those who, by temper or temperament, are predisposed to be censors; and his subsequent career as a journalist received in the Indian camp of Sir Colin Campbell, in the camp of General Benedek during

Mr Russell.

* A glance back to what is said of the Commissariat in Chapter III. will show how it was possible that a power to bestow rations upon civilians in Lord Raglan's camp should be vested in the Treasury.

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the Sadowa campaign, and finally, in the war of 1870 at the quarters of the German invaders, showed him plainly to be a loyal conformist who, under fitting arrangements, could effectively serve his employers without betraying the interests of belligerents who might make him their guest.

But in the Crimea, as already we have seen, he wrote under no restraint except such as might be imposed upon him in the midst of the most pressing haste by his own sagacity and good feeling. He perhaps thought it likely that the accounts he was sending to England (including those which laid bare the weakened state of our army) would soon be made known to the enemy by spies, deserters, or prisoners, and that information thus passing direct across only a few furlongs of ground would neutralise any advantage which the Russians might otherwise gain from intelligence sent home by himself, and only reaching Sebastopol after a circuit of thousands of miles; whilst, moreover, he may fairly have trusted that any dangerous statements imparted by his hurrying pen to the conductors of the journal at home would be there, after all, in the hands of men not only able, but anxious, to suppress hurtful truths. Be that as it may, he wrote freely; and the conditions surrounding him were such that, even if he had been wanting in that power of acute observation which he amply possessed, he could not have helped perceiving the state of weakness and suffering to which our army had been reduced.

It was scarce necessary that a narrator engaged

in his task at this time should be of the adventurous type of the more modern 'war correspondents,' because the seat of war had become fixed; but Mr Russell had the very assemblage of qualities that was needed by one who would convey an idea of the condition of things on the Chersonese to our listening people at home; for, it being of course his duty to learn and to tell, there was no one who could learn more quickly or tell better what he had learnt. His opportunity of gathering intelligence depended of course in great measure upon communications which might be made to him by officers of their own free will; and it is evident that to draw full advantage from occasions found in that way, the enquirer, instead of 'enquiring,' must be a man so socially gifted that by his own powers of conversation he can evoke the conversation of others. Russell was all that and more; for he was a great humourist, and more, again, he was an Irish humourist, whose very tones fetched a laugh. If only he shouted 'Virgilio!'—Virgilio was one of his servants—the sound when heard through the canvas used often to send divine mirth into more than one neighbouring tent; and whenever in solemn accents he owned the dread uniform he wore to be that of the late 'disembodied 'militia,' one used to think nothing more comic could ever be found in creation than his 'rendering' of a 'live Irish ghost.' In those days when the army was moving after having disembarked at Old Fort, he had not found means to reorganise the needed campaigning arrangements which his voyage from Bulgaria

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had disturbed, and any small tribulation he suffered in consequence used always to form the subject of his humourously plaintive laments. He always found, sooner or later, some blank leaves torn out of a pocket-book, and besides, some stump of a pencil with which to write his letters—letters destined in the sheets of the 'Times' to move the hearts and souls of our people at home, and make them hang on his words; but, until he could lay his hand on some such writing materials, there was ineffable drollery in his way of asking some sympathy for a 'poor devil of 'a "Times" correspondent without any pens, ink, or 'paper.'

By the natural play of a humour thus genial and taking, he thawed a great deal of reserve, and men talked to him with much more openness than they would have been likely to show if approached by a solemn enquirer in evident search of dry facts. Russell also had abundant sagacity; and besides in his special calling was highly skilled; for what men told him he could seize with rare accuracy, and convert at once into powerful narrative.

Moreover, after a while, though hardly, I think, at the first, men could not well help imagining that Mr Russell's good or ill will to them might express itself perhaps in the 'Times,' and this of course was a prospect which could not but give him power; for—reminding one of the merry species of priest often found in his own native land—he seemed charged—notwithstanding his drollery—with commission to bind and to loose. So long as his tent remained pitched

amongst those of the Headquarters Staff, statements useful for his purpose were not, I think, largely offered him; but from the time when he moved to the camp of the 4th Division, he became surrounded by willing informants, whose communications were not unmixed with sharp criticism of the men in authority;* so that almost without special effort to learn the state of our army, he not only came to know much of the dismal truth, but also heard what could be said in disparagement of the ruling administrators, and thus had at command the materials which, when used as he knew how to use them, with the skill of a powerful writer, might well move our people at home; for, after having already laid hold of their minds and their hearts with his pictured story of battles, he now had to be appalling them with accounts of the misery endured on the Chersonese Heights, and inflaming them with rage, honest rage, when step by step led to infer that, because of delinquencies traceable to one or more public servants, their troops had been suffering and dying, and still must suffer and die.

Long ago when they showed how our army established itself at Gallipoli, the conductors of the 'Times' had been giving publicity to a good deal of criticism which, however, though keen and vexatious, was not apparently calculated to do any much greater harm than that of weakening authority by weakening the general confidence. But before the

* A Division in camp is apt to take a tone from its chief; and Cathcart we saw (see *ante*, vol. iv.) was in a highly critical frame of mind. It was natural that after his death, on the 5th of November, the tone should for some time continue.

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terrible period of the winter campaign, and indeed no less early than the month of October, they had already begun to make disclosures so likely to benefit the enemy, and therefore to injure their country, that Lord Raglan, on this anxious subject, felt constrained to address the Secretary of State :—

Lord Raglan's letter of the 13th November on the subject of the Press.

Private.]

'BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, *November* 13, 1854.

'MY DEAR DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,—The perusal of 'the article in the "Times" of the 23d of October, 'headed "The War," obliges me in discharge of my 'duty to draw your Grace's attention to the conse- 'quences that may arise from the publication of de- 'tails connected with this army. The knowledge of 'them must be invaluable to the Russians, and in 'the same degree detrimental to H.M.'s troops.

'I enclose the article itself, and a note of the 'principal points of information which it affords, and 'which probably were forwarded to and had arrived 'at Sebastopol by telegraph before the mail of the '23d reached Headquarters.

'You will perceive that it is there stated that our 'losses from cholera are very great; that the Light 'Division Encampment is kept on the alert by shot 'and shell which pitch into the middle of it; that 40 'pieces of artillery had been sent up to our park, 'and twelve tons of gunpowder safely deposited in a 'mill, the position of which is described, and which 'of course must be accurately known by the enemy; 'that the Second Division had moved and taken

'ground in the vicinity of the Fourth Division, in 'which a shell had fallen with fatal effect in a tent 'occupied by some men of the 63d Regiment; and 'that the French would have 60 heavy guns, the 'British Army 50, and 60 more would be supplied 'by the Navy.

'The mention of the employment of red-hot shell 'was then adverted to.

'The position of the 93d is stated, as is that of the 'Headquarters of the Commander of the Forces; 'likewise, the possible dearth of round-shot, and of 'gabions and fascines.

'I will not fatigue you by further alluding to 'what is announced in the letter, but I will ask you 'whether anything more injurious to the interests of 'this Army could be effected than the publication of 'such details.

'I am quite satisfied that the object of the writer 'is simply to satisfy the anxiety and curiosity, I 'may say, of the public, and to do what he considers 'his duty by his employers, and that it has never 'occurred to him that he is serving much more 'essentially the cause of the Russians, and is en-'couraging them to persevere in throwing shells 'into our camps, and to attempt the destruction of 'the mill where our powder is reported by him to 'have been deposited; but the innocency of his in-'tention does not diminish the evil he inflicts, and 'something should be done to check so pernicious a 'system at once.

'I do not propose to take any violent step, though

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'perhaps I should be justified in doing so; but I 'have requested Mr Romaine to endeavour to see 'the different correspondents of the newspapers and 'quietly point out to them the public inconvenience 'of their writings, and the necessity of greater pru- 'dence in future; and I make no doubt that they 'will at once see that I am right in so warning them.

'I would request that you should cause a com- 'munication to be made to the editors of the daily 'press, and urge them to examine the letters they 'receive before they publish them, and carefully ex- 'punge such parts as they may consider calculated to 'furnish valuable information to the enemy.'

The Duke of Newcastle's appeal to the editors.

The Duke of Newcastle's consequent appeal to the editors elicited from them, as may well be supposed, very courteous and proper replies;* but the task of determining what information should be disclosed to the enemy was really not one that could be prudently or even fairly entrusted to men whose bias and habits of mind were perforce on the side of publicity; for a journalist condemned to 'reserve' is like a child in a church who suffers a kind of torture because forbidden to prattle. From one, at least, of the journals whose correspondents and editors had thus been adjured,

Its failure.

there continued to flow out disclosures of a kind only too well suited to advantage the listening enemy. So early as the 18th of December, when the assur-

* These are before me; and perhaps in years past they would have been interesting to many, but considering the lapse of time, I refrain from publishing them.

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ance given by the editor of the 'Times'* was hardly yet twelve days old, the paper laid before all men—including, amongst others, Prince Mentschikoff—a whole treasury of that kind of knowledge for which commanders less favoured are commonly yearning in vain.

The 'Times' of the 18th of December.

After seeing the paper, Lord Raglan thus wrote in private to the Duke of Newcastle :—

Lord Raglan's observations upon it.

Private and Confidential.]

'BEFORE SEBASTOPOL, *January* 4, 1855.

'MY DEAR DUKE OF NEWCASTLE,—I deem it my 'duty to send you a copy of the "Times" newspaper 'of the 18th December, and to draw your attention 'to an article or rather letter from its correspondent 'with this army.

'I pass over the fault the writer finds with every-'thing and everybody, however calculated his stric-'tures may be to excite discontent and encourage 'indiscipline, but I ask you to consider whether the 'paid agent of the Emperor of Russia could better 'serve his master than does the correspondent of 'the paper that has the largest circulation in Europe. 'I know something of the kind of information which 'the commander of an army requires of the state 'and condition of the troops opposed to him, and 'I can safely say, that during the whole of the war 'in the Peninsula, the Duke of Wellington was 'never supplied with such details as are to be found

* It was dated the 6th of December.

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'in the letter to which I am desirous of attracting 'your attention.

'Some time ago the correspondent stated for 'general information, and practically for that of 'Prince Mentschikoff, the exact position in which the 'powder for our siege batteries was deposited, and 'he now suggests the ease with which the ships in 'Balaclava harbour could be set on fire.

'He moreover affords the Russian General the satis- 'faction of knowing that our guns stick in the mud, 'and our horses die under their exertions. But as 'regards intelligence to the enemy, the mischievous 'parts are so obvious that I will not further trouble 'you with a recapitulation of them. It will be 'sufficient that I mark the parts which strike me 'as the most obnoxious.

'I am very doubtful, now that the communications 'are so rapid, whether a British army can long be 'maintained in presence of a powerful enemy, that 'enemy having at his command, through the Eng- 'lish Press and from London to his Headquarters by 'telegraph, every detail that can be required of the 'numbers, condition, and equipment of his opponent's 'force.'*

No resulting cessation of the perilous disclosures.

The remonstrance proved vain. To many perhaps it seems strange that our journalists, who were after all men of warm patriotism, and had their hearts in the war, should have wilfully taken a part in dis-

* To Duke of Newcastle, marked 'Private and Confidential,' January 4, 1855.

closing the state of our army, and thus apprising the enemy of the superb opportunity offered him; but from the habits of political life contracted in a free and self-governing country, there had resulted a tacit assumption that, to remedy public evils, the first step should be to denounce them; and upon a subject so largely, so deeply interesting as the state of our suffering army, it was scarce possible that men to whom public utterance had become the very breath of life would think it to be for the good of their country that they should make a vow of silence, and keep it, during several weeks.

The bias in favour of publicity.

To say that the then editor of the 'Times' was by calling, by temperament, or by habit of mind well qualified to restrain the great journal from doing harm to the State, would be to go widely astray; and besides, in effect would be fastening an undeserved kind of reproach on the memory of Mr Delane, because showing, or tending to show, that he did not at all act impulsively, and erred (when he erred) by design.

Mr Delane and his task as editor of the 'Times.'

None who knew his disposition will think that any charge aimed in that way could have ever been made good against him. Far from being well fitted by nature to play the cold part of a censor, and defend his country against a mighty torrent of motives tending, all of them, in favour of publicity, the great editor—florid, bright-eyed, in the prime of keen life, and beaming with zeal—was a man of warm, swift-coursing blood, a man of those qualities which, in speaking of wine, are called 'full-bodied' and

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'generous,' a man of great ardour, great eagerness, and one passionately imbued with that very spirit of journalism which, if he would save his country from being harmed by the 'Times,' he needs must bridle and moderate.

His eagerness early in life made him keen after hunting, and the joy, the triumph he found in going well across country may be reckoned amongst those impulsions which (by furnishing motives for toil) gave the character of something like 'prodigy' to his youthful career as a journalist. Whilst an undergraduate at Oxford, if not indeed almost a 'freshman,' and surrounded by comrades who were, many of them, still only boys in their ways of life, his desire to provide fitting means for stable expenses reinforced the other strong motives—motives all of them good and generous—which impelled him to use his brain-power in the way that he did; and he not only toiled as a journalist whilst still what the law calls an 'infant,' but achieved, I suppose, more success of the kind that he sought than—except perhaps in America—had ever been compassed before by any lad under age.*

He was so constituted that, like the devoted liegeman of chivalrous times, like the advocate still often found in modern courts of law, he could not only 'take up' with vehemence the cause that he had to support, but become its convinced partisan; and, therefore, his ready obedience to all the words of command, which from time to time laid down anew

* See Note on this subject in the Appendix.

the varying path of the newspaper, did not prove him to be consciously acting in a spirit of servile ductility. On the contrary, those who best knew him claim a right to believe that, with every alteration ordained, he himself really, honestly changed.

Thus not only by temperament, but also by labours gone through at so early a period of life, that they needs must have tended to mould his character and form his habits of thought, Delane was well fitted to become the director—not so much of a journal that would lecture mankind in the spirit of a didactic professor, explaining what was right and what wrong by the aid of extrinsic thought—but rather of a print like the 'Times,' which sought to inculcate with force ideas already perceived to be slowly moving our people.

To steer the great journal in calm and in storm, to be arbiter of the 'policies' of States and the reputations of men, to have the strength of mind and of body that the labour required, and to be all the while exulting—unaffectedly exulting—in the task—this, one sees, was to have intense life; and, Delane's genial nature inclining him to let comrades share the elixir by hearing the things he could tell them, his society, as may well be supposed—and this especially at critical periods—was beyond measure interesting to men who cared eagerly for the actual state of the world.

He used generally to bend conversation in such way as to avoid coming into dispute with his comrades, and liked best to reinforce what they said by conveying in anecdote some fragments of that rare

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knowledge concerning men and their motives with which — because daily the hearer of unnumbered appeals to the 'Times'—he was always abundantly armed. What he said bore often so closely on the actual march of events, that his speech had the kind of zest which attaches to the words of a commander or statesman when going to pass into action, and it sometimes gave to his hearers the small, yet not despised, pleasure of being by several hours in advance of the rest of the world.

Although steeled against the notion of harbouring any vain tenderness for people he had to see crushed under the wheels of his Juggernaut car, he still—like many another engaged in truculent duties—was of a good and kindly nature. He too often, as indeed we shall see, allowed the strength of the 'Times' to become extreme violence, but this generally, unless I mistake, because he was strenuous, because he yearned to be forcible, and not because he felt spite. As understood in his days, the task he sustained was one necessarily involving aggressions well fitted to put a hard strain on any relations subsisting between the editor of the journal and the people assailed in its columns; yet after having been busied during many a year in this boisterous sort of work, he was able to say with just pride that he had never become estranged from a friend, nor even indeed from a comrade.*

* Afterwards, *i.e.* in 1867, there took place an estrangement which separated him from a former comrade during a period of rather more than three years, but oddly enough in that instance it was the Editor of the 'Times' who took umbrage at what, after all, was only a mere 'return thrust.'

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Deriving from nature large gifts, and by circumstance clothed with vast means of acting upon the volitions of men, and sometimes even ruling events, Delane, as may well be supposed, did not show the real eagerness of his nature in the weak, bustling way of people reckoned for nothing, whose time is of scarce any worth; and indeed he had the outward composure, the air of power not yet put forth that becomes a strong man of action; but it always could be seen that his energies were rather compressed than lulled —that the furnace, if so one may speak, had its fires 'banked up' in the day-time, yet still was always aglow, always ready to blaze into action an hour or two before midnight.

When already in his carriage and moving to the scene of his midnight labours, kind nature used to grant him some minutes of sleep, upon which, because giving fresh strength, he used to set a great value; but from the moment of his entering the editor's room until four or five o'clock in the morning, the strain he had to put on his faculties must have been always great, and in stirring times almost prodigious; for although of course the great bulk of the manifold work required for constructing a number of the 'Times' was performed by subordinates, and although it rested with others—perhaps I might say with one other—to determine what—at least for a while—should be the chosen policy of the journal, its editor had to execute the general design; and these were the hours of night when often he had to decide —to decide of course with great swiftness—between

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two or more courses of action momentously different; when, besides, he must judge the appeals brought up to the paramount arbiter from all kinds of men, from all sorts of earthly tribunals; when despatches of moment, when telegrams fraught with grave tidings, when notes hastily scribbled in the Lords or the Commons, were from time to time coming in to confirm, or disturb — perhaps even to annul — former reckonings; and these, besides, were the hours when —on questions newly obtruding, yet so closely, so importunately present that they would have to be met before sunrise—he somehow must cause to spring up sudden essays, invectives, and arguments which only strong power of brain with even much toil could supply.

English journalists set themselves tasks rarely even so much as attempted on the continent of Europe, undertaking to form, to deliver, to publish swift, definitive, well-reasoned judgment upon subjects quite newly presented to the knowledge or the attention of men;* and one of the more anxious duties imposed on the editor in these midnight

* One of the most successful feats of journalism in this direction was performed by the 'Morning Chronicle' in the days of the Free Trade Debates. The late Lord Derby one night, or rather far on in the morning, delivered a great speech in favour of Protection; but when he sat down amid the cheers of his party, there already had been written in pencil by one of his hearers a complete 'leading article' which dealt at the instant with his arguments one after another. So, the early trains which carried down into the country the great orator's speech, carried down with them also what Free-traders declared to be its complete refutation. It is known that the hearer of the speech whose pencil so instantly answered it by the leading article was Mr Hayward.

hours was with careful, well-defined aim to convey either orally, or by means of some brief little note, the few, yet enkindling words which were destined to evoke all at once compositions of a forcible sort, and often of great ability, from the brains of other men.

In conversation, one day, a great leading-article writer conveyed an idea of his craft by using one of those metaphors which in half a minute or less did at once all the work of long statements.* 'To write 'a leading article,' he said, 'may take only from two 'hours to two hours and a-half, but then all the rest 'of your time you are a crouching tiger, waiting, 'waiting, to make your spring.'

To be lord of these 'crouching tigers,' and—before two o'clock in the morning—say which should spring, and at whom—this was one of the midnight tasks devolving on the editor. But only one out of many. If high organisation averted a too-anxious hurry, it could not dispense with the strain put on numbers of men who by concert must achieve great and varied labours within a fast narrowing space of hours, and finally, minutes.

And, of course, labours fraught with great consequences to numbers of mortals could not long go on uninterrupted by molestation from without. Because of some insistant below, great in name, or mighty in earnestness, the janitors charged to protect a great editor's too precious moments would from time to

* The saying was by Mr Moseley, a man believed, as I hear, to have been the most powerful of all leading-article writers.

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time be importuned to take in a card with eager words written in pencil; and amongst the missives thus pressed, there used to be now and then one which could not be safely despised, nor even indeed withstood.*

Which of any appeals such as these might drive its way through all barriers, would depend upon the vigilance of the outposts, and the discriminating sagacity exercised by an inner line of sentries on guard; but meanwhile comes a time when the editor sees laid before him a strip of newly-printed paper, and understands at a glance that one of the 'crouching tigers' has now made his spring; for what he holds in his fingers is a 'proof' of the 'leading article'—one perhaps of great moment—for which he gave his brief order some three or four hours before. For the delicate task then awaiting him any other than he would require to be in a state of tranquillity, would require to have ample time. But for him there are no such indulgences. Whilst seizing the import and range of the new creation, and bringing it into smooth harmony with his general design —nay, even into conformity with his standard of literary excellence†—he sees the hand of the clock growing more and more peremptory, and the time

* Some idea of the nature and variety of these interruptions may be gathered from what, though called 'Fiction,' still helps to illustrate the truth. See extract from the Paper given in the Appendix.

† I have heard that when thus dealing with the 'proofs' he disclosed a severe taste, striking out a great deal of ornament, and many of what—to the writers—had seemed the best parts. By this discipline, if so one may call it, he fostered a disposition to write in sterling, unadorned English.

drawing nearer and nearer when his paper must, must be 'made up.'

It was only after hard throes that, emerging, as it were, from a tumult of swiftly exerted brain-power, the journal of the awaiting day could quicken, could burst into life; and one hardly sees how the great company were able to believe that their editor, in the midst of toils so engrossing, in the midst of that storm of energy which he had to evoke and direct, would coldly bend his mind to the question whether this or that phrase, whether this or that statement of fact, might not do harm to the country. It would have been hard to expect such a feat from any editor busied in racing thus against time, even if he had been a man armoured against counter impulses by the qualities and the temperament of a tranquil, resolute judge; but much less was there room for supposing that any such guardianship of State interests could be severely and peremptorily exercised by an editor glowing with zeal—an editor always imbued since even the days of his boyhood with that eager spirit of journalism which instinctively sees in publicity a cure for all ills of State, and can scarcely cast eyes on the bloom of a newly-caught 'piece of 'intelligence' without a passionate longing to seize and broach it whilst fresh.

If the statements I already have made, and the passages I am going to quote, show delinquencies on the part of the 'Times,' which few or none will defend, I may now trust that some apprehension of the qualities and temperament of Mr Delane, and of

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the task he had to perform, will serve to shelter his memory from no small part of the blame which might otherwise attach to an editor who suffered the journal he guided to make pernicious disclosures, and failed to curb the excesses of which we are going to hear.

To give the direction of the 'Times' to Delane in the interest of the journal itself was to maintain, and even increase its giant strength, to enhance its literary excellence, and to keep it closely, warmly in harmony with the opinion and the passions of the country; but to make him also a censor, charged to watch on behalf of the State, and protect it against indiscretions committed by the journal he served, was to lay on him a task clashing stubbornly with the rest of his duties, and one against which his whole nature, reinforced by the effect of long training, would tend to make him rebel.

Caution that might well have been given by the owners of the 'Times' to their editor.

Why the owners of the 'Times' failed to exercise the needed restraint, it is not so easy to see. They might have stayed the swift hand of their editor, saying rightly: 'Take care! It is true that the welfare of our paper is advanced by the unstinted publication of well-founded intelligence; but, though journalists, we also are English; and it would seem that the exigencies of war have been raising a conflict between our mere selfish interests and the duty we all owe to our country. If that conflict be once perceived and decisively recognised, there is not a man or woman amongst us who would hesitate to make a right choice; but the danger is that our peace-formed habit' of assuming the wholesome-

'ness of free disclosure may mislead us in this time 'of war. What Russell is telling us about the state 'of Lord Raglan's army may be only too true; but 'the enemy, remember, is listening; and if only for 'the sake of what remains of this suffering, this 'valiant soldiery, let us try to stay our tongues until 'the danger shall have passed. The remnant of 'English troops before Sebastopol is so feeble in 'numbers, so weakened by hardships, so cruelly over-'laden with duty, that, if only the enemy knew what 'you now seem going to tell him, he might be ex-'pected to seize his advantage, and trample out by 'sheer weight of numbers, the flickering spark of 'life that still glimmers in the English camp. What 'restrains him is awe. He knows indeed that our 'army is weak, but he imagines that its weakness 'may perhaps be a weakness of that strange kind 'which tempted him to his Inkerman venture, and 'therefore he happily falters. Are you going to 'explain to him that this faltering of his is a huge 'mistake, that our army is in the grave, or in 'hospital, and that his awe, however well-founded 'when he reckoned his Inkerman losses, would be 'now like fearing a ghost?

'It is true that deserters and spies may be telling 'him, and telling him largely of the mortality and 'the sickness afflicting our camp, but they also per-'haps apprise him that reinforcements are landing, 'and that, somehow, at the English Headquarters 'there is an air of routine and composure which few 'would judge to be possible unless Lord Raglan

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'thought himself strong enough to withstand a determined attack. You must see the almost priceless 'advantage that there is in that veil. Are you 'going to tear it away? Are you going to assure 'the enemy that that formidable nonchalance apparent in the Headquarters Staff results only from the 'pride or the carelessness of a number of well-bred 'officers, and ought not to deter him from making— 'from making whilst yet there is time—a second 'Inkerman venture?

'It is true, very true, that in England the defects 'of our laws and the faults of our administrations 'are habitually corrected by public outcry—by public 'outcry, continued during periods that always are 'long, and sometimes indeed are extended to thirty 'or forty years; but it is not by such insistance 'that in this distressing conjuncture, any actual good 'can be done; for the needs of our troops are immediate, their distance some three thousands of miles. 'The knowledge we are acquiring is indeed a store of 'great value; for in time perhaps it will help us to 'denounce any system, or any public delinquencies, to 'which we may trace the privations too certainly endured by our troops; but no words we can now print 'in London will save, or help, or comfort them. Supplies and large French reinforcements with, besides, 'fresh troops of our own, have long been moving to the 'seat of war; and if the enemy should remain blind 'for a while to his present opportunity, our army 'may be saved; but its deliverance will not be immediate, and it is during a period of several weeks

'that, for once, we must try to stand silent. We 'abound in knowledge of the condition of things on 'the Chersonese; and even supposing Lord Raglan 'to have sent home by every mail clear, accurate, 'and comprehensive reports, we may still perhaps be 'in possession of some hitherto untold facts which 'ought to be known at Whitehall. If we are, let us 'whisper our knowledge to a Minister who will use 'it for the advantage of our own country; but, for 'Heaven's sake! don't blurt it out to a world which 'includes St Petersburg—which includes the very 'commander now opposing our troops before Sebas- 'topol.'

If such words of deprecation as these fell from any remonstrating owner, they were all of them uttered in vain. Throughout the dire period of the winter, Mr Russell, by every mail, was sending home vivid accounts of the evils that obstructed supply, and of the hardships, the sickness, the mortality afflicting and destroying our troops; and, his narratives being given to the world with the sheets of the 'Times,' all this priceless intelligence, by means of the telegraph wire, was swiftly carried into Sebastopol.*

Mr Russell's continued disclosures respecting the state of our army:

To Mr Russell's perilous disclosures the conductors

* The conductors of the 'Times' were fully aware of this. 'Indeed 'we have ever had in our eyes the fact that there are Russian agents 'and partisans in this country who peruse the newspapers every morn- 'ing in quest of hints for their employers, and who, by means of the 'telegraph, can communicate what they may think of any service to 'Berlin, and thence to Warsaw, before the 'Times' is in the hands of 'the London reader. We are well aware of the fact that, during the 'whole of the war, the shortest road from Sebastopol to London, and 'consequently from London to Sebastopol, has been through St Peters- 'burg.'—'Times,' 7th December 1854.

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of the paper in London from time to time, added pith. After the 5th of November, and subsequently, during several weeks, it was an object with the Allies to mask their weakness, and avert attacks by showing what aggressive vigour they could in their siege operations. This mask the great journal tore away, saying recklessly, in so many words, 'We are reduced 'to the defensive,'* and from time to time, in other forms, pressing this ugly fact upon the attention of all, including of course the enemy.

These reinforced by the conductors of the journal at home:

The mischief of communications like these, passing round from our camp to the enemy, lay mainly, of course, in their truth; for, if our army had been abounding in strength, little harm would perhaps have been done by telling the enemy that it was weak. But the fidelity, no less than the prudence, of Mr Russell's accounts, was freely brought into question. The officers of our army at home did not like seeing military business brought under the kind of observation which Mr Russell applied to it; and these men, having learnt from their training to overrate the value of minute accuracy as compared with that of substantial truth, were disposed to rely on small errors as a proof that Mr Russell's accounts must be altogether untrustworthy. There, plainly, they did him wrong; and indeed, if strict accuracy were to be made the test of trustworthiness, the world would be left without knowledge. One great error Mr Russell committed—namely, that of imagining that Lord Raglan did not visit his divisional

The general character of Russell's narratives.

* 'Times,' 24th November 1854.

camps, and especially his field hospitals; but the mistake of the correspondent was a mistake largely shared, and sprang, we must own, very naturally from the cause already explained.* From the facts passing under his eyes, and the accounts—whether hearsay or otherwise—pouring in upon him from numberless quarters, he had to make what choice he could under conditions that must have been often embarrassing, and sometimes of such a kind that they might tend to warp his judgment; but I do not detect in his letters any foregone resolve or desire to exaggerate the troubles resulting from hampered supply, or the hardships endured by our troops. What people mistook for exaggerated statement was often no more than that disturbance of proportion which must always be caused by a writer who pictures with vivid power some chosen part of a subject. The strong, narrow beam of light that he throws on one spot does not really play false with the truth, yet so fetches it out from the midst of a universe left unillumined that mortal eyes are deceived.

Thoughtful men, whether soldiers or not, saw the danger of heedless disclosures well fitted to advantage the enemy—saw, moreover, the mischief of a great public outcry, with its offspring of random impeachments in the midst of an arduous war, and some of these observers were led to speak harshly of the 'Times' correspondent; but perhaps if they had striven to analyse the grounds of their judgment, they would have found that the cause of their anger

* See *ante*, p. 210, *et post*, p. 271.

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lay not so much in the purport of Mr Russell's accounts, but rather in the violent use which they saw being made of his statements by writers and speakers at home.

III.

Intensity of the feeling roused in England.

The suffering endured by our troops was an evil that might well be expected to provoke the wholesome wrâth of a nation; for, although of course armies before had suffered and perished when coerced or trampled down by defeat, here was one that lay suffering and perishing in the arms of Victory.* Our people at home before long were in the agonies of pity and anger. If forgetful for a moment of Distance and Time, both writers and speakers might think they could help our dying troops on the Chersonese by appeals addressed to the rulers;† but whether so believing or not, they at least might arraign a system which had failed to save our army from want, and mark out those public delinquents to whom any faults could be traced. The people were keenly desiring, nay, indeed, were almost insisting that some State offender should expiate the distress of our troops; and the general sentiment of the time was well enough indicated by the ironical title of a pamphlet which called itself 'Whom shall we 'Hang?'

* The sufferings of our army may be said to have become acute on the 14th of November, scarce nine days after the battle of Inkerman; and no military reverse had occurred in the interval.

† That they could not really give such help, see *ante*, p. 256.

To learn and say who was in fault whole multitudes were ready and eager, yet not for the moment well qualified; because those who best knew the truth were engaged far away in Crim-Tartary; and besides, the enquirers were bent upon a too narrow view of their subject. The dominant cause of the suffering endured by our soldiery was after all, as we saw, that double or compound generalship which had not only brought the Allies to abandon their territorial conquest from the Alma to the Mackenzie Heights, but to make themselves prisoners for the winter on a bleak, barren promontory where their horses no less than their troops must live wholly, if they could live at all, by means fetched on shipboard from distant lands; and it happened that that very strategy in all its ill-omened stages had received from the country at large so warm an approval as to be now exempted from criticism. Men who only a few weeks before had exultingly praised the 'Flank March,' and the counsels leading on to a siege, now looked naturally in some other direction for the causes of what all agreed to be a distressing calamity;* and without enquiring why armies with the ample charter of victory should choose to winter out on the Chersonese, sought only to learn how the hardships

Criticism diverted from the main cause of evil;

* The predisposition which inclined our people to be delighted with the 'Flank March,' and to approve the subsequent counsels owed its origin to a healthy, patriotic impulse much more worthy to be admired than blamed. Still, this judgment when decisively formed, and riveted by being expressed, had of course a strong tendency to make critics persevere in their approval of the adopted strategy, and seek elsewhere for the cause of the winter sufferings.

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inseparable from any such undertaking had been augmented by neglect or mismanagement. The loss of the Woronzoff Road, the undue allotment of work imposed on Lord Raglan's troops, the hurricane of the 14th of November, and withal, the miscarriage of administrative business—these were four causes tending to aggravate the main evil—the evil brought about by false strategy; but the three first were not of such kind that they would serve as good fuel on which public anger might feed. For it was obviously unprofitable, perhaps even dangerous, to rake up cause of blame against Canrobert for acquiescing in Liprandi's encroachment on the 25th of October, or for leaving tasks to our people beyond their utmost strength; and of course there was but little temptation to go on scolding a hurricane brought about by some rebel Æölus not yet duly in awe of the 'Times.' There remained the obvious subject of administration; but even there, the enquirer saw before him a far-spreading part of the thicket which could not be well marked for clearance, because that Royal Commandership which (by clashing with Parliamentary Government) forbade the concentration of power essential for a good War Department had roots striking deep into the polity of the English State, and it was obvious that, to make wholesome changes dependent upon the previous abolition of the Horse Guards would be to defer them—to defer them beyond any known time.

and concentrated upon

So the critics applied their whole power to a scrutiny of those lesser mischiefs which had aggra-

vated, though they had not produced, the hard trial undergone by our troops. Their attitude towards the calamity may be likened to that of the fabled officer on the evening of the 14th of November who ignored the assaults of the hurricane, and rated his shivering servants for the wet, the mud, the snow, the utter want of good cookery that he found on the wretched spot where—until torn away by the blast—his comfortable tent had been standing.

lesser matters.

The common soldier had a better understanding of the cause of his sufferings, and it is not paradoxical to say that he knew better because he thought less; for a scrutiny so minute as to make a man study a subject under a wrongly-chosen angle of vision is a poorer guide for man's judgment than even the most rapid glance which sees things in their right proportions. The soldier's manful theory was that his hardships in the main resulted from stress of war, and that belief was the very truth; for, although our army had gone into duress of its own accord, with a set will to carry Sebastopol, that same duress, when once in full force, was as much 'stress of war' as if it had been caused by defeat.

The soldier's true idea of the cause of his sufferings.

To this plan of withdrawing attention from the paramount or master force, and ascribing calamities to subordinate causes, the great journal devoted itself with untiring power and skill. Its gifted writers inveighed against the civil, military, and naval administration, both at home and abroad, making out in some of their moods that the calamity had resulted from want of System, and sometimes main-

Part taken by the conductors of the 'Times.'

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taining that System — they commonly called it 'Routine'—was the very, very root of the evil.

Between 18th and 23d December, approaching change in the spirit of the 'Times.'

In the face of a prospect then already overcast and still darkening, we saw how firmly the will of a united and resolute people was voiced by our great English journal; and if the time of trial had compassed no more than that month which ended on the 18th of December, a too hasty empiric might have inferred that the steadfastness often attributed to nations led by their nobles, might belong, after all, to a nearly self-governing people, if blessed with a guide so determined as the one England found in the 'Times.'

But, unhappily, the steadfastness of the great journal was put to a harder and more protracted test. With what result we shall see.

The accounts that by mail after mail now came pouring in from the Chersonese proved every day more and more painful as regarded the actual state of our army, but also more and more gloomy in their bearing upon what was to come; and men needed no great weather-wisdom to see fast approaching a storm of public grief mingled with rage.

The conductors of the great journal knew that, by the law of their singular calling, as then understood, they were doomed to the task of giving full voice to the people in its hour of passion; and that—having been calm, sober, steadfast two or three days before—they must now prepare to turn frantic. Signs show that they hesitated; and one likes to be able to surmise that, on the part of the gifted men who so lately had raised the great journal to what I marked as its

zenith, there was reluctance to begin the descent. But—if ever indeed it existed—this praiseworthy faltering ceased on the 23d of December, and then there was witnessed a change, no less decided and sudden, than that which in barrack-yard drill responds to the word of command.

It was vain, on behalf of the country, to ask for so precious a sacrifice as that of a little reticence; vain even on behalf of our army to whisper a 'hush!' and make sign that Russia stood listening; for the vow of the daily journalist reverses the vow of the Trappist, so that, whilst the one must never speak, the other—except on a Sunday—must never, never be silent — nay, must keep himself always, always, always in the act of forcible utterance.

And again, there was this haunting thought: It now seemed only too certain that an army engaged day and night with a powerful enemy, an army invaded by sickness, yet exposed on bleak downs to all the rigours of winter—an army neither able to advance nor retreat, yet, if stationary, barely able to live — was already in grievous peril; and, on the other hand, the conductors of the great journal were possessed by a notion that, to use their own phrase, they must needs keep the public 'prepared' for coming events—that is, to speak plainly, must act as the standing prophets of England, always busied in 'telling her fortune.' And from this sense of gipsy-like duty, when coupled with the evident danger of our army, it resulted that the journal which, a few days before, had superbly rebuked every

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access of alarm or discouragement was now to be enjoining despair.*

Extravagance of its language in reference to our winter troubles.

And in ungoverned terms: 'The decline and 'decay of our great expedition;' 'lamentable fail-'ure;' 'the eve of a great national disaster;' 'hideous complication of fatal neglects;' 'tremen-'dous crisis;' 'verge of ruin;' 'the noblest army 'sacrificed' to the 'grossest mismanagement,' 'in-'competency,' 'lethargy,' 'aristocratic hauteur;' 'that huge imposture our military system;' 'the 'absolute wreck of the system;' 'our army unavail-'able in a few weeks for any effective service;' those disabled by fatigue and sickness, 'said to be no 'fewer than a thousand a-week;' 'about a hundred 'a-day sent to the hospitals, never to return fit for 'service;' 'a regular drain of 6000 a-month;' of our infantry rank and file, 'hardly 2000 in good 'health;' our army 'fallen;' 'about to lose, unless 'some extraordinary stroke of fortune intervenes, our 'one, our only army;' 'a few spectral figures are all 'that remain;' 'menaced with a disaster to which 'there can be found no parallel in the dreary annals 'of war;' 'total disorganisation;' 'collapse;' 'an-'archy;' 'human hecatombs;' 'every man of any 'sense sinking into despair;' 'twilight settling 'steadily down into night and darkness;' 'Ser-'bonian bog of despair;' 'the British army has

* 'The readers of the "Times" will have been prepared for the 'disaster we now have to announce.' To be in a position for uttering some such sentence as that if a disaster should take place, was evidently an object that dominated the minds of the 'Times' conductors, and drew them into most of their errors.

'perished as an army;' 'destruction of the British army;' 'the bubble has now finally burst, the last chance is gone;' 'appalling realities;' 'our national reputation sacrificed, our part tarnished, and our future overclouded;' 'England's ill fate, sore cost, and, we had almost said, foul dishonour;' 'unutterable woe and misery;' 'disaster;' 'hideous catastrophe;' 'frightful catastrophe;' 'final catastrophe;' 'chaos come again, night, anarchy, and confusion;' 'abyss of misery;' 'abyss far lower, and more awful;' 'the doom of nations,'—these were some of the strains in which—Russia all the while thankfully listening—the great journal chanted our dirge.* CHAP. IX.

To make such wailings appropriate, it was almost essential that England, far from being, as she still was, victorious, should herself surrender to Nicholas, and be dragged captive into Siberia.

Invectives of the 'Times' against Lord Raglan.

Whilst avowing and even preaching despair, the great company undertook to hurl blame; and we have seen that there was one of Lord Raglan's sterling qualities which, however ennobling, laid him open to mischievous comments. He hated all ostentation, but the charlatan's ostentation he loathed. If a charlatan general proposes to visit a suffering camp, he chooses a time when he knows improvement is ripe, comes clattering up to the ground with a great cavalcade at his heels, shows himself in his well-

Lord Raglan's want of ostentation:

* The above citations are from several numbers of the 'Times,' beginning with the one of the 23d December 1854, and ending with that of the 10th February in the following year.

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known costume, seems to give a huge number of orders, seems to crush one or two hapless functionaries with ferocious displeasure, calls up some (before chosen) soldier, tells the man he remembers him well at the battle of the Spheres, says he means to look out for him again on the field of Armageddon, gives him either a cross or some coins, and then gallops off, well assured that, by the help of his salaried glorifiers acting vigorously upon human credulity, he will pass for a chief who has almost wrought miracles by 'the 'eagle glance of his eye,' and the irresistible might of his will.

His way of transacting business.

For the performance of any such comedy, whether useful or not, Lord Raglan was by nature disqualified. Every time that he moved from his quarters, he had before him the object of transacting real business, unconnected with imposture or show; and the greater part of his toil was toil at the desk—toil engrossing many hours of each day, with, besides, no small part of each night. But to read the despatches, the letters, the minutes, the memoranda, the orders resulting from all this labour is to see that in every line, the commander's written utterance is an utterance fraught with action—and whether taking effect in the trenches, or in the camps, at Balaclava, or on board ship, at Eupatoria, Varna, or Schoumla, at Scutari, or Constantinople, at Malta, Corfu, or Gibraltar, in our Embassy at Vienna, or our Embassy in Paris, or finally, in our departments at home, was an engine always aptly conducing to the huge and multifarious business of a war conjoined with treaty, in which,

not only as general and administrator, but also as diplomatist he had to bear the main part. Yet Lord Raglan did not trust to his pen when he thought that words from his lips might perhaps have a better effect. He was habitually in oral conference with his generals, and men of other rank, or of no rank at all, whom he had summoned to Headquarters for the purpose; and it may be observed that for one of the most trying and momentous of all his duties, that is, for the maintenance of our difficult and even perilous relations with the French, he made little use of the pen, trusting rather to personal intercourse.

Of the way in which a commander can most effectively use his energies, he himself, it would seem, must commonly be the best judge. We saw how the gifted Todleben defended Sebastopol without ever writing a line, and even without reading papers;* but the mighty task he had set himself was one bearing no kind of resemblance to the toils engaging Lord Raglan; and besides, it must be remembered that between the ages of the two men there was a difference of some thirty years. The engine wanted for effective command is brain-power; and this, in their more youthful days, men can often exert to the utmost, although getting through every day a great deal of bodily toil; but in advanced life, they must husband their strength, taking care not to waste in mere galloping the energy required for command. Whether the ideal commander that a nation is often longing to find, can best be sought for amongst the

* *Ante*, vol. iii.

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young, or the middle-aged, or those further advanced in life—this is a question of great interest and not to be easily answered; but of all the courses open to choice, the plainly absurd one would be to appoint a commander advanced in years, yet, in the matter of bodily labour, require him to imitate youth.

And in judging the English commander's way of transacting business, it must be remembered that he had at his side a staff officer whose qualities gave a happy completeness to the means of wielding command brought together in our Headquarter camp. Whilst Lord Raglan, as we have seen, was wont to toil long at the desk, General Airey was a man so constituted as to be always eager for duties requiring strong bodily exertion; and the ceaseless activity of this gifted officer, his devotion, his zeal, his sound, rapid judgment, his keen, far-reaching sight, and his vigorous, propelling delivery of all the orders he carried, seemed to furnish the very lever required for giving full effect to authority.

The air of stability at his Headquarters.

But again, for misrepresentation, there was this other opening: The steady, punctual, orderly habits, and cool, self-possessed bearing of the officers surrounding Lord Raglan gave Headquarters that air of strength buttressed by custom, and if so one may call it, 'inveterate,' which, if having its evident worth as a sign of unshaken, efficient command, was also a very real support to the policy of averting attacks by the spell of a stiff-looking front;* but—observed at a time when our troops were cruelly suffering—this

* The enemy, through the 'Times,' became immediately acquainted

calm of course offered temptation to any people so conditioned in mind that they liked drawing ugly contrasts between the ruled and the rulers. Men industriously performing their duties in the accustomed way could be easily accused of indifference.*

Lord Raglan was, most days, on horseback, either visiting his divisional camps, or his hospitals, or going down to transact business at Balaclava, but he used on such occasions to ride with only a single aide-de-camp;† and since, also, as indeed we have seen, he commonly wore a plain forage-cap, and a wrapper so overfolding that it did not disclose his maimed arm,‡ there was nothing to show a spectator, unless chancing to stand very near, that one of the two horsemen passing was the Commander of the forces. Under such conditions of course, many officers and men, to say nothing of the newspaper correspondents, were able to say that they never saw anything of the General; and upon the honest, though deceptive testimony thus given, when coupled with the unquestioned sufferings of our troops, the great journal founded its charge—a charge importing nothing less than that in the midst of the

Samples of the attacks delivered by the 'Times.'

with the aspect of things at Lord Raglan's Headquarters. See the next note.

* 'Nonchalance' was what the 'Times' imputed to the Headquarter Staff, and certainly an air of 'nonchalance' harmonised well with the 'policy' above indicated.

† That the above expression, 'most days,' is accurate and well-warranted, see *post*, p. 341.

‡ The warm 'wrap' was one that had been thoughtfully sent him from Vienna by Lady Westmoreland, and not being English in shape, it seems to have been somewhat disguising.

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winter sufferings, Lord Raglan was neglecting his army!

First, against a class;

As though striving to deepen the curses which such an accusation invoked, by appealing to any hatred found smouldering between class and class, our great journalists served up the remains of a somewhat rancid old doctrine which—when fresher in the days of King George—had nurtured the souls of young 'Radicals;' and they not only declared aloud that the army was 'one vast job, the plaything of our 'aristocracy,'* but gave point to their language by

and next against Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff.

showing that the General and the Headquarter Staff, to whom they ascribed neglect and mismanagement, were guilty of being well-born. After speaking of our dying soldiery, the writer went on: 'But their 'aristocratic general, and their equally aristocratic 'staff view this scene of wreck and destruction with 'a gentleman-like tranquillity. Indeed, until stung 'into something like activity by the reflections of 'the press, the person on whom the highest respon-'sibility for this situation devolves, had hardly 'condescended even to make himself superficially 'acquainted with its horrors. The aristocracy are 'trifling with the safety of the army in the Crimea, 'just as here they are dawdling over that peri-'odical luxury, the formation of a Government.'† By a Thersites-like stroke of comparison with the wants of our soldiery, the very food, the very shelter supposed to be obtained at Headquarters were made a subject of taunt; and he who amongst living men

* 'Times,' January 20, 1855. † Ibid., February 3, 1855.

was unsurpassed in his sense of duty, unsurpassed in his thoughtfulness for others, he who made every day of his life a day of well-applied toil, he who giving his all of strength and working power to the Queen and the country he served, was destined to sink under his burthen, scarce finding, scarce seeking, an interval between public care and death—he, he and no other, was the chief held up to indignation as one who continued 'to while away his time in ease 'and tranquillity among the relics of his army.'* The writer even thought it becoming to point to a time when Lord Raglan and his staff would 'return 'with their horses, their plate, and their china, their 'German cook, and several tons' weight of official 'returns, all in excellent order, and the announce-'ment that, the last British soldier being dead, they 'had left our position in the care of our gallant 'Allies.'†

After quoting attacks of this kind, one need hardly, I think, lose time in bringing their author to judgment. For if the offender be dead, there is obvious warrant for silence; whilst, if he be living and sentient, the mere reproduction of his words will give him enough of pain. At the mere sight of what he penned, he will writhe like a disinterred worm unwittingly cut by the spade.‡

Not simply during a day or two, but week after

* 'Times,' February 8, 1855. † Ibid., February 9, 1855.

‡ The idea of suggesting that Lord Raglan and his Staff would soon be the only survivors of the army, was not a mere escapade, repented of the next day. Far (apparently) from seeming loathsome to the conductors of the paper, it was several times reproduced.

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Long continuance of the excesses committed by the 'Times.'

week, nay, month after month, the excesses of the great journal continued; and, if one be asked how it happened that in a country supposed to be firm, sober, and self-respecting, extravagance of this kind could be long and persistently rampant, the explanation I offer is this: The English are not a logical people, and so ill-versed in abstractions, so dimly acquainted with the idea of what a Continental mind would accept as a 'principle,' that, to guide them in their search after truth, they have not the clue of pure reason. Under such conditions, they are for the most part confined to two methods. When adopting the first one, they seek after truth by travelling through masses of detail, and the conclusions they reach in that way are not only apt to be just but suggestive of wise and moderate, though somewhat clumsy measures.

Suggested explanation of the phenomenon.

The obvious fault of the method is its extreme slowness — a slowness so hampering that, if there were no other expedient, the whole country would be passing its life in a political jury-box, for ever, for ever, for ever enquiring, enquiring, enquiring. What commonly makes England possible is the second method — and that is, the swift, trenchant argument of ridicule. But here, it need hardly be said, the last method, for once, had no place, because the suffering endured by our troops was an occasion so painful, that the idea of applying ridicule to the descriptions it generated would have been beyond measure revolting. So, that resource being inapplicable, England had to pursue the first method, and

words piled high upon words rose accumulating in mountainous bulk till the day of the winnowing came. What the grain of truth was that remained we long ago saw; but it took eighteen months of enquiry to attain the result; and our country meanwhile had to suffer the fate of being lowered in character by the journal that spoke in her name.

The real merits of our army, in contrast with the cited language.

The cry broke out at a time when, however imperilled and weakened, our whole army, from the general downwards, might be thought to have earned some gratitude from our people at home by giving them a right to their pride. If the Alma, if Inkerman were already too many weeks old to be cared for by swift-flitting journalists, the conflict in front of Sebastopol was one even then going on, one maintained day and night without ceasing, one not indeed shaped and condensed into what men regard as a 'battle,' yet involving more surely than battles commonly do the fate of the wrestling armies.* In that deadly strife, our army had long been persisting; and though weak, though hugely outnumbered, had always held its ground. I, of course, know sufficiently well that for an army poor in numbers and bodily strength, yet warding off an enemy's hosts during many a week by the true might of heart and soul, one would vainly bespeak the applause accorded by men to a 'victory;' but a thinking observer may tell himself (though he cannot so make the world judge) that with all its undying

* For our army (without the assent of the enemy) no retreat was possible.—Lord Raglan to Lord Panmure, 'confidential,' 3d March 1855.

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renown, the weird battle of the 5th of November proved no higher, no more warlike quality in commander or officers or men than did the struggle maintained by Lord Raglan and his troops when unmovedly confronting the enemy throughout the dire winter period with what, in a sense, may be called the dread spectre of our Inkerman army.

What our troops had to do, if they could, was to maintain their ground day and night, under all the rigours of weather, against an enemy hugely greater in numbers, with the resources of a fortress behind him, to fend off his imminent masses by maintaining such a demeanour as might deter him from seizing his opportunity, and finally, to persist in this struggle until the needed reinforcements should land. The problem—scarcely put into words—for words would have bred a new danger—was faithfully worked out by Lord Raglan, by his officers, by his men. Although enduring privations rendered cruel by stress of winter, and maintaining day after day, nay, week after week, nay, even month after month those alternations of watchfulness and combat which constituted, if so one may speak, a kind of protracted engagement, our army from first to last did not lose a foot of ground, it did not lose a gun, above all, it did not lose heart, and—being happily never a day without biscuit, and cartridges—held steadily on to the time when, with recruited strength, it could once more become the assailant. Thus, apart from the passive virtue of fortitude with which our men bore their hardships,

there was going on every hour a valorous conflict which, if destined to endure—and endure, as we know, it did—long enough to meet the hard exigency, would become a warlike achievement not easily exampled in history. It was becoming and right that our people, when they contemplated the feats and the struggles of an army thus valiant and steadfast, should feel their pride chastened by grief at the thought of the winter in camp, and embittered too with the anger already gathered and gathering against any public delinquents to whom default might be traced; but they were in an unworthy and foolish mood, if they listened approvingly when the journal, grown loud in their name, began decomposing our army in the midst of its strife with the enemy, intent to find heroism (as indeed they well might) in the private soldier, but railing against the commander, and running down the officers under him. CHAP. IX.

A little search into the rudiments of military coherence would have shown the revilers that, if an army stands fast under pressure of numbers and trials such as those endured by our troops, its prowess must always be owing to the qualities of the commander and the officers under him no less than to those of his men. The ill policy of the outcry:

If the outcry thus wildly transcended the bounds of moderation and truth, what is there to be said of its policy?

We may all well believe that, though eager to overstrengthen strong words, the writers and speakers thus erring did not really deceive themselves much, Its language not meant quite in earnest;

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still less wish to lead others astray; and that, as one man will resort to 'italics,' and another to gesticulation, and another to a volley of oaths, they indeed used sentences cast in the shape of actual assertions, yet designed them, all the time, for no more definite purpose than that of intensification or emphasis. So that when, for example, they shrieked in loud condolence with England for having undergone the 'disaster' of a 'hideous collapse,' and being in the nether 'abyss,' they only meant in reality to make her curse the 'green coffee' or some other hapless miscarriage, with increased and increasing rage; but the mischief was that by many, above all by foreign observers, the outcries meant only as growls would be mistaken for what, after all, they in form really purported to be—that is, for grave declarations asserting the incapacity of their country to carry on the business of war.

but abroad taken literally.

Notwithstanding the wild excesses we have seen the great journal committing, there remained, after all, in its columns so large a proportion of sound, sterling matter, that the whole mass taken together must have imparted, along with some errors, a great abundance of truth; but it was not of course in the nature of things that any such wholesale distribution of insular writings would ever take place abroad; and, on the contrary, all might foresee that each sentence in which military incapacity was imputed to England by Englishmen would be eagerly caught up by the foreigner, like a gem from the midst of coarse pebbles, and—without the slightest

admixture of counteracting citations—would be not only quoted and requoted, but long remembered against her. Therefore, wild and wrong as they were, these confessions of military weakness so fastened upon the minds of people on the Continent as to make them greatly alter their reckoning of England's strength in land warfare.

The dangers and mischiefs thus caused.

When a nation stands engaged in armed strife, her warlike repute is a treasure not simply conferring bare honour, like a star or a cross, but largely, visibly, practically conducing to make her strong, and by its opposite bearing on the heart of her enemy conducing to make him weak; whilst, again, in negotiation, the measure of warlike power which opinion concedes to each nation stands of course for the power itself; so that, plainly, to destroy such a treasure — a treasure like 'credit' in commerce, like 'character' in private life—is to weaken any State thus depreciated for the purposes of both combat and treaty. Yet the time our wild citizens chose for announcing aloud—and quite wrongly—the administrative collapse of England was one when, having her army engaged in close strife with an enemy hugely greater in numbers, she had need, bitter need, of her warlike repute for the purpose of that lasting struggle; but had need of it also for the maintenance of fitting relations with the difficult ally at her side, and, moreover, for the support of negotiations she was then carrying on with more than one neutral State.

There was yet further mischief to be wrought by

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the same provoking cause. The time already approached when France and England would meet the enemy in conference with the hope of there wringing from his fears the conditions of an honourable peace; but the very air of the Continent, when breathed for a week at Vienna, was destined to teach our negotiator that the stress put on Russia by arms had been singularly lightened by words—by the words of our writers and speakers declaring before all the world that, for the purposes of war administration, their country was an incapable State.

The lasting harm done to their country by Englishmen depreciating her power.

The effect that our railers produced by decrying the military power of their country has not yet been effaced on the Continent; and in any momentous negotiations undertaken at this day by England the confessions of warlike incompetence she was thus, as it were, made to utter, still tend to weaken her envoys.

Question whether the outcry did any counterbalancing good.

Thus the outcry did harm to our country, did her harm at the time, did her harm of a lasting kind; but may it not also have wrought some counterbalancing good? May it not have so acted upon the minds of our rulers as to make them take or hasten the steps which were to raise our army from its state of weakness and suffering to one of strength and wellbeing? Considering that the outcry was sustained with extraordinary vigour and ability during a lengthened period, and that it wrought so powerfully upon the public mind as to bring the very constitution of these realms into a state of trial, a decisive and well-founded answer to the question I have thus

submitted would not only have, as I think, a great historical interest, but also tend to act with great weight upon the demeanour of the country in any future war. The outcry shook the State, and weakened the country at a time when strength was greatly needed; but, on the other hand, did it prove that the dry business of army administration can be aided by the counsels or the pressure of able newspaper-writers? Did it bring a greatcoat or a blanket, or more or better food or drink to any soldier on the Chersonese Heights?

The question sweeps so wide a range that there would be evident rashness in meeting it with an absolute negative; but, on the other hand, an affirmative answer would, perhaps, stand in danger of being somewhat bluffly refuted by the peremptory logic of dates; for amongst the chief measures destined to give the succour required, it would be hard to find any which had not been set on foot before the outcry began.

Want of proportion between the outcry made and the measures about to be proposed by the 'Times.'

If the measures the 'Times' might propose were to be in any manner of keeping with the loudness of the outcry it made, they could not, of course, be otherwise than stupendous and even Titanic; but for some time, at all events, the conductors of the journal did not so take their own words in earnest as to judge that, because our country had fallen into what they called an 'abyss,' there was therefore any necessity for departing from our slow English ways.

They, of course, had to mark down the victims who should be offered in sacrifice to expiate the

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winter calamities; and there was one step in this direction which could be easily taken. To displace some or all of the Ministry by holding them responsible for the ills that had happened—this, of course, was a simple and quite familiar task, belonging to the very rudiments of our English State science. But the measure, if taken alone, was too easy to have the appearance of being at all sufficient; and, on the other hand, it did not seem prudent to go beyond the bounds of mere scolding against a victorious commander whilst locked in close strife with the enemy in a distant part of the world.

Still, with care and deliberation, and perhaps, strange to say, with some help from a member or two of the Government,* a middle term might be found by declining to recall the commander, yet refusing him a loyal support.

The assailants perhaps would have liked to remove at once every officer, whatever his rank, on whom their censures were falling; and indeed they were ready to go the length of declaring that what our army wanted was 'a Head;'† but having no successor in prospect who might be able to bear a comparison with the existing chief, they did not

* Some may think it surprising that communications, however circuitous, should be going on between any member of a Government and the conductors of a journal opposing it, but these things happen.

† Besides all the numberless passages finding fault with Lord Raglan, there may be found here and there in the 'Times' some sentences disclosing a *wish* that Lord Raglan could be recalled, but I do not observe any really *urging* the change in set terms. What the journal said of its own language was, that it had asked, '*more or less plainly*, that he' [Lord Raglan] 'be recalled.'—'Times,' February 12, 1855.

bring themselves to resolve that they would peremptorily demand his recall. They knew him to be a commander in whom our own army, and the army of our Allies, put full trust.*

However, before many days, they were ready with their plan of attack; and on the 23d of December they disclosed it to the eyes of the public. With all the apt materials for invective that could be distilled from the accounts of Mr. Russell and numberless other contributors, the great journal was to rage against Lord Raglan and his Headquarter Staff; yet, so far as concerned the measures to be founded on that fierce impeachment, was to shape its hostility upon a quaintly modified plan which seems to have been borrowed from the theory of 'constitutional 'government.' Lord Raglan was to become a kind of sovereign who would 'reign,' as it were, from a throne without being held fully answerable for the acts or omissions of his vicegerents; but, on the other hand, the chiefs of his Headquarter Staff were to be elevated by this novel theory to a station like that of some 'responsible Ministry,' and—again like a 'Min-'istry'—to expiate the winter misfortunes by being dismissed from their posts! Lord Raglan, under this charter, would begin his 'constitutional reign' by

Its curiously-planned hostility to Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff.

The 'constitutional' system devised for our Headquarter camp:

* There used to be a somewhat general belief in camp that, for fighting purposes, the French soldiery placed great reliance on Lord Raglan; and this belief received a signal confirmation when (as will be seen in my last volume) the French Emperor proposed to place a large body of French troops under Lord Raglan's command; for no such proposal could have been thought of, if it had not been warranted by the belief above mentioned.

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submitting against his will to be deprived of the well-tried staff officers in whom he placed the fullest confidence, including even the one who was truly his 'right-hand man!'*

To people at all apprehending what commandership means in an army, this application of 'constitutional' doctrine to a Headquarter camp must seem beyond measure preposterous; and the astonishment, the anger, the noble scorn with which Lord Raglan heard of a proposal for sheltering him behind his staff officers, may be imagined by all who know anything of his loyal, generous nature.

The reception of such a measure by Lord Raglan.

Incommensurate as it was with the scale of lamentation and invective in which the great journal had spoken, this quaint measure could be hardly expected to remain very long in its favour; and the time soon came for advising a course of action that harmonised with the utter despair already enjoined by the paper. Lest a nation—once famed for its steadfastness—should be sending out fresh troops to support our imperilled army, the great journal solemnly declared itself against such fond efforts; and the nation which, in face of this warning, should dare to reinforce Lord Raglan, was thenceforth to be only a waif shaken off, and unblessed by the 'Times.' 'We are all to persevere 'with the whole force of the empire in carrying Lord

The declaration against supporting Lord Raglan by reinforcements.

*'Times,' 23d Dec. 1854.—Passages contained in that and many later numbers of the journal might be regarded as disclosing an opinion against retaining Lord Raglan in the command of the army, but these did not in direct terms advise his recall, and the writers, speaking generally, seemed to take it for granted that in that respect there would be no change.

'Raglan and his Staff through with it, and enabling 'them to redeem their credit at the risk of another 'army—this is what Government is prepared to ask.' . . . 'For our own part, whatever others may be 'pleased to do, we will take no further part in such 'an affair. We wipe our hands of the war under the 'existing management. If Government, if the House 'of Commons, or the British public choose to sell 'themselves to the Aristocracy, and, through the 'Aristocracy, to their enemies, it is their own affair; 'we wipe our hands of the national suicide. All that 'we can do is to protest and to warn, and that we 'will not cease to do, though hitherto we have done 'so in vain. Under the existing management, we 'repeat, we have no choice left but to protest against 'the further prosecution of an enterprise which leads 'to nothing but ruin and disgrace.'*

Its protest against the further prosecution of the enterprise.

The great journal, 'inspiring our people whilst itself 'by our people inspired,' had advised, had enjoined, had ordained the attack on Sebastopol, doing this with the strength of a torrent that bore down all the obstructors.† And, if the campaign were a drama evolving itself with consistency, the power that thus could bind would prove also the power to loose; so that now a countermandate, delivered by the voice which had sent out our troops would withdraw them at once from the strife, and bring them home to a

Failure of the endeavour to stop the prosecution of the enterprise.

* 'Times,' 25th Jan. 1855.

† See *ante*, the third chapter of vol. ii., in which I have laid much stress upon this. Except amongst those who remember the year 1854, there will be always, I imagine, some difficulty in conceiving the real height of the ascendant enjoyed by the 'Times.'

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country so tractable, or else so faint-hearted, as to show itself cured of war-fever by the discipline of Commissariat troubles.

But happily for the warlike repute of England, there was no such dramatic consistency in the actual course of events; for it did not prove true that the power which had driven our people into a warlike enterprise would be strong enough to make them abandon it. On the contrary, when the great journal flinched, and even appealed to class hatred as a motive for giving up the campaign, our people remained firm of purpose. The newspaper rulers saw this, and their notion of abandoning the enterprise was itself very soon abandoned.

IV.

We saw the great company sanctioning a plan of attack on Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff, which was to turn the command at Headquarters into a sort of 'constitutional' sway. But it must not be taken as certain that the idea of this curious onset originated in the brain of a journalist; for at nearly the same time a measure, contrived in like fashion and directed against the same public servants, was also begun, though in privacy, by a new and strange accuser.

A coincidence.

Down to nearly the close of the year, the personal relations between the Secretary of State for War and the General commanding our army had been always

The relations between the Duke of Newcastle

most friendly, and based upon mutual confidence. The Duke of Newcastle's natural gifts were not of such kind that they could broadly be put in comparison with those of Lord Raglan; but between the Minister and the General there was at least one point of resemblance, for they were, both of them, indefatigable men, each devoting his whole care and energy to the work in hand. After the 10th of April (when Lord Raglan left England) the communications between the Minister and the General were necessarily in writing, and thenceforth the despatches and letters from time to time passing between them became, of course, a full record of the vast amount of public business which the two were transacting in concert. A critic, of what men call 'style,' would be apt, I imagine, to say that the smooth, unobstructed flow of the Duke of Newcastle's sentences was hardly so admirable as the simple grace of Lord Raglan's diction; but the Minister and the General alike wrote with ease, with precision, and in words transparently clear. The recipient of our Minister's instructions being one who—then Lord Fitzroy Somerset—had toiled at the side of Wellington in all his European campaigns, and had afterwards become deeply versed in the business of our army administration, his experience, of course, carried with it a weight of authority which in one sense, perhaps, might seem tending to invert the ostensible positions, and make Lord Raglan the master of his official chief. But—far indeed from desiring autonomy—Lord Raglan truly liked to acknowledge and feel that he was the loyal

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servant of the State, or, as he would express it, of 'the Queen;' whilst, moreover, his fine taste and high breeding so governed every sentence he framed that, without ever seeming to have the air of a teacher, he always knew how to teach.

Thus the intercourse between the Minister and the General, as carried on by the pen, came to be on so good a footing that, without let or awkwardness, the one who had to give orders could also ask for guidance; whilst the one who had to obey could always tender counsel with the certainty that it would be received with a welcome. The Duke of Newcastle had the merit of being more accessible than Lord Raglan to new ideas, and to the value of those rough-hewn expedients which are of infinite value to a nation when seeking to enter upon war with a small and cramped peace-establishment; but in forethought—one of the faculties believed in those days to have been grievously wanting—the General excelled the Minister.*

From the enlightening effect of the despatches and letters received from Headquarters, the Duke of Newcastle learned a good deal of the conditions surrounding our army, and was thus saved from some of the errors which, amongst our people at home, were then

* There was nothing, for instance, more worthy of forethought than the care of our army in the approaching winter, and it was so early as the 8th of August (see *ante*, p. 2) that Lord Raglan initiated deliberation on this subject in a private letter to the Duke of Newcastle. Of course, all such deliberation was liable to be turned to nought by the joint strategy of the Allies, and the fortune of the war; but the date of the cited letter shows that 'forethought' at least was not wanting.

about to be rife. Thus, for instance, he knew that Lord Raglan — with his troops busied constantly against the enemy—could not command the 'hands' with which to 'metal' a road from Balaclava up into camp; and, instead of complaining that the soldier, whilst already forced to do the work of three men had not been made to do the work of six, he laid his own shoulder to the wheel, and with excellent promptitude initiated the construction of a tramway, with carriages propelled by steam-power.* He also took measures for accelerating the communication with England by means of a submarine telegraph between the Crimea and Bulgaria. His newly-declared supremacy over the members of scattered offices was not so supported by official machinery as to insure his being able to make them work with despatch; but in zeal he never failed. Lord Raglan acknowledged the vigour of his ceaseless efforts to meet the winter calamity, saying, 'You have left 'no stone unturned.' As regarded the duties of the War Department, and the intricacies of our whole administrative labyrinth in Westminster and

* Many causes—including, I believe, an unusually lengthened continuance of strong westerly winds—prevented this wholesome measure from coming into use until a very late day, but the Duke initiated it with such admirable promptitude as to be able to announce the completion of his arrangements for the purpose so early as the 2d of December. 'Mr Peto and Mr Betts,' he writes, 'have in the handsomest 'manner undertaken this important task with no other condition than 'that they shall reap no pecuniary advantage from it. They will em-'bark rails, engines, &c., with 300 skilled workmen, in a very few days, 'in steamers, and engage to have the railroad at work in three weeks 'after landing at Balaclava.'—Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, 2d December 1854.

CHAP. IX. London, Lord Raglan's mastery of the subject was so complete that, from his desk in the farm-house at Headquarters, he could and did constantly aid the transaction of business at home; and—because knowing thoroughly both the nature and the limits of our military resources—he never wrote asking for anything which lay beyond the power of our Government. The Quartermaster-General was speaking of Lord Raglan, and of the direst period of the winter troubles, when he said: 'With a touching 'indulgence for the difficulties of others, he was 'accustomed to say that it was not possible for 'the home authorities to do much, but he knew 'they would do all they could.' *

It seems plain that the happy relations thus established between the two public servants remained unimpaired down to even the 15th of December; for on that day the Minister sought advice from the General upon a matter so secret, so delicate, so momentous as to make it apparently certain that the Duke of Newcastle must have then been reposing in Lord Raglan the most absolute confidence that one man could well place in another.†

Yet on this same 15th of December, we are within

* Address of Quartermaster-General, p. 171.

† He was asking Lord Raglan to advise him upon the choice of a general who, to meet the event of his being killed or disabled, should be secretly named as his successor. Of course to advise usefully on such a subject, a judgment as perfect as mortal judgment could be was beyond measure needed; and (because of the susceptibility of generals who might feel humiliated by the terms of the meditated dormant commission) the subject was so delicate, and required such absolute secrecy that, to treat it was like handling dynamite.

three days of a time when the spirit of our War Minister will be seen undergoing a change, and within one week of the day when, although not recalling Lord Raglan, he will withdraw from him —in that hour of adversity!—withdraw from him all his old confidence.

The approaching change.

How this became possible we shall presently have to see.

Unofficial accounts from the Crimea.

When unofficial accounts from the Chersonese began to pour in upon the Duke of Newcastle, he could hardly have learnt from them anything of really grave moment which had not before been imparted to him by Lord Raglan in drier figures and words, but the detailed though fragmentary narratives conveyed in their new poignant forms impressed his mind more acutely than sober general statement; and perhaps it might be said not inaccurately that what previously he only had known, he now both knew and imagined. Though not throwing any really fresh light on the troubles besetting our army, the numberless anecdotes brought him inflicted new, separate pangs. Whoever has learnt the conditions under which our soldiers were labouring must of course know what room there would be for distressing accounts, and how easily any narrators describing vexatious hindrances and misfortunes and troubles of various kinds might attribute them all to 'mismanagement' instead of the more stubborn causes from which we before deduced them.

Their effect upon the mind of the Duke of Newcastle.

Thus when ships were discharging their cargoes in the diminutive cove of Balaclava, there often

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occurred such a 'block' in the transit from the sea to the road as must needs cause grievous delays —delays likely to be more or less aggravated by the necessarily resulting overthrow of previous calculations; but such troubles resulted inevitably from want of space, want of hands, want of land-transport power, and were only kept within bounds by the zeal and exceeding ability of the naval and military officers engaged at our port of supply.*

Still, observers judging in haste, were prone—as indeed seems quite natural—to imagine that all the hindrances must have been caused by defective arrangements; and conclusions of this kind, with, besides, many strong representations concerning the ill state of our camps and the privations afflicting our troops, were not only pressed upon the Duke of Newcastle by the voice of the newspapers, but also by numbers of people who had received private letters from our camp.

In the newly-constituted office of the War Department, there, apparently, were wanting those body-guards who, in old, well-appointed offices, protect a Minister's time. The unhappy Duke was assailed by

* For the task of supervising and regulating the supply operations going on at Balaclava, the officers selected by Lord Raglan were men of whom he thus writes: 'There has always been an officer of the 'Quartermaster-General's department at Balaclava. For a very con- 'siderable time there have been two, and these are not to be surpassed 'in efficiency by any officers in the army. Their names are Major 'Mackenzie and Captain Ross. Lieutenant-Colonel Harding, late 'aide-de-camp to General Pennefather, is the commandant, and capi- 'tally does he do his duty.'—Private letter to Lord Panmure, 3d March 1855.

accounts laid before him as proofs—conclusive proofs —of mismanagement; and it would seem that, by this time, he had lost, or was losing, his composure; for the statements which most strongly impressed him were all, in reality, valueless, and some of them beyond measure silly.

One man, letter in hand, and effervescing with the excitement of a discoverer, came invading the office to show that, whilst our horses were perishing in the Crimea for want of forage, a quantity of chopped straw had been seen in a house at Scutari, some three or four hundred miles distant.*: Another adviser, less foolish, but not less a waster of time, applied his mind also to the question of forage, and showed that, whilst our cattle were starving, pressed hay in abundance was floating about neglected in the harbour of Balaclava.† There also, the Duke had to hear, there were seen swimming numbers of planks, which, the witnesses declared, might have been turned into wooden houses, and cut up and used as fuel.‡ As a rule, each discoverer came armed with a theory

* For reasons stated *ante*, pp. 121, 122, 'chopped straw,' in large quantities, could not be conveyed on board ships; but it is the accustomed food of horses in Turkey. As well might a man suggest for the slaking of a traveller's thirst in the Sahara desert that a pitcher of good Nile water had been seen in Egypt.

† The objectors to this suggestion were the horses and cattle. They refused to eat the hay. Endeavours, I believe, were made to render the sea-soaked hay less repulsive, but always in vain.

‡ There had long been planks in abundance at Balaclava (see *ante*, pp. 140, 141), but to drag them up to camp and convert them into houses or fuel there was needed draught power and 'hands'; and it was for want of draught power and 'hands' that the army languished.

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explaining who was to blame, and if not impugning Lord Raglan, the multitudinous judges were prone to deliver sentence against his Headquarter Staff, or—more pointedly—against its ablest and most powerful member—that is, the Quartermaster-General.

Of course, what many an impatient officer might be naturally sighing for, when he came down to Balaclava in quest of any kind of supplies, would be a few puissant staff functionaries so obliging to the individual, and so careless of the public service, that they could and would stop the transaction of all other landing and transport operations, and so give him at once what he wanted. The disappointment of those very English, though of course disorderly wishes, found an echo at home, not only in private life and in newspapers, but even, one may say, in our War Department; for the Duke of Newcastle adopted the complaint of a remonstrant who came to let him know that at times, when a cargo of clothes and ammunition was lying on board a ship in the harbour of Balaclava, there was 'nobody who thought it his 'duty to order its immediate discharge.'*

One angry relative of an officer, who had apparently pitied himself for his privations came and turned the mischief into a set grievance by saying

* Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, 22d December 1854. I look upon that complaint as a choice specimen of the criticism which our people were applying to the subject. If the object had been to throw everything into confusion, the suggestion would have been excellent. The ammunition was wisely kept on board by the special directions of Lord Raglan, as the best way of securing it against risks of explosion.—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 6th January 1855.

that it must have resulted from the omissions of a staff potentate who yet had found time to 'write '[ ] more than six fine ladies;' and to even such kitchen-lore as that the Minister now could listen!*

In the prosperous days, our War Minister had been left to work on with but little molestation or help; but the other chief members of the Government were by this time alarmed, and when the harassed Duke crossed Whitehall to attend a Cabinet, he there found little less peace than in the outer world, for his colleagues now always assailed him, complaining that 'more had not been done' to avert the calamity, and insisting that 'something must be done.' To return to the War Office was to find perhaps there awaiting him a few of those dreaded 'wives of offi-'cers,' who from time to time came to complain of hardships endured by their husbands, and in some cases forced him to know that, down even to wardrobe calamities, he must answer for all that went wrong.†

Under this pelting storm of complaints, the Duke

* Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, 1st Jan. 1855. The staff officer (General Airey) pleaded guilty to having written *three* letters to ladies in England—one to his own wife, one to the sister of an officer prostrated by illness, 'who was in great anxiety about her brother,' and another to Lady Raglan, informing her of her Lord's state of health. The fact of the Duke of Newcastle's having listened, without indignation, to such a statement, seems to show that the strain put upon him had for the moment proved to be more than his brain and nerve could bear.—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, January 20, 1855.

† 'I am told that the want of change of linen, and the state of the 'roads, are equally my fault.'—Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, 22d December 1854.

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Effect of the public anger upon the mind of the Duke of Newcastle;

of Newcastle now began to imagine, and presently felt very sure, that there was not only mismanagement and want of system at Lord Raglan's Headquarters, but that the chief officers of his Staff, and more especially his Quartermaster-General, must be gravely in fault; and in that last impression he was confirmed by a curious mistake which might have been corrected in half-an-hour by sending a note to Pall Mall. Still the Duke (although wrongly) having once received a conviction thus adverse to the rule at our Headquarter camp, might he not perhaps frankly impart it to Lord Raglan?

The temptations disposing him to throw blame on Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff;

There, there, exactly there, was the plane which, because of its smooth incline, led down from right to wrong. To impart such a conviction to Lord Raglan, instead of first asking for an explanation, would be, of course, to accuse him; and, the accuser being Secretary for War, and therefore the judge, his words would be nothing less than an authoritative condemnation of the General and his Headquarter Staff. Such a step imagined and taken against the general still entrusted with the command of our army might seem, beyond measure, outrageous; but then also, unhappily, it was tempting. The people, we saw, were raging with the rage that must needs have a victim, and already the Duke had begun to undergo the sensation of falling.*

* 'Of course at present I have to bear the whole blame.'—Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, 22d December 1854. 'I shall, of course, be 'the first victim to popular vengeance; and the papers, assisted by the 'Tory and Radical parties have pretty well settled my fate already.' —Same to Same, 1st January 1855.

He was not a man who would have consciously and wilfully suffered himself to be drawn from the right course by a selfish motive; but what mortal can say that, when he feels the ground sinking from under his foot, he will be strong enough to resist the instinct which moves, which almost constrains him to clutch at some other for safety? The Duke was honestly conscious of having administered his Department with untiring zeal, and, upon the whole, with great ability; and now that his wrong, hasty judgment had really turned him against Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff, was not justice, he perhaps might imagine, was not justice after all, on his side? By blaming Lord Raglan, and condemning, nay, roughly displacing the chief officers of the Headquarter Staff, might he not disengage himself from the cruel fate of a Minister held answerable for the sufferings of our army? *

And again, if he were to act with a little audacity upon what had now suddenly come to be his real opinion, might he not bring about such a blissful accord between himself and the angry people, that —at least for a while—they might travel together on the same road, with the great journal cheering them forward? The country at large would shrink perhaps from the notion of recalling its victorious general from the very presence of the enemy, but,

* Expressions contained in the Duke's letters show that this idea was running in his mind. Thus, after saying (see last footnote) that he has 'to bear the whole blame,' he adds, 'but already public attention is turning to the officers in the camp.' And in a subsequent letter there is a similar indication.

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to satisfy its anger, might like to see his management censured, yet have the censure so aimed that, although in a sense directed against Lord Raglan himself, it should be made to glance off upon the officers of his Headquarter Staff, and cause them to be removed from their posts.

If the mind of the nation was destined to take such a bend, and throw blame on the absent combatants instead of the present civilians, why should not the Duke turn aside into that path of refuge and thus place himself once more in unison with his fellow-countrymen? If the course, though a strange one, was a course he really thought wholesome, why should not he frankly adopt it, and thus not only follow the clue afforded by his own real convictions, but also furnish his country with the much-needed victims, and so once more emerge into sunshine as a Minister who, if baffled for a while by the military administrators, had at least taken care to find out and remove the delinquents?

One obstacle lay in his path. Upon the authority of unofficial informants, whether coming to him in private or speaking through newspaper channels, could he venture at once to denounce the administration and management of an army engaged in the field, and to throw unconditional blame upon officers of its Headquarter Staff, without first taking care to learn what the honoured commander himself might think fit to say for himself, might think fit to say for the officers long accustomed to toil at his side? Could he do this thing against one whom he still

was entrusting with the command of our army, against one from whom, even so lately as the last preceding week, he had been asking secret counsel upon State business of the deepest moment?

In the happier days of the autumn the Duke, I am sure, would have answered such questions with an indignant 'No.' But the prospect had darkened. Public anger by this time had risen, was rising, still rising. At such a time plainly the Minister could not get himself welcomed into the midst of the angry multitude, if the most he could say of himself as a finder and slayer of victims was simply that he had asked for explanations, and might expect them in five or six weeks. Plainly, if he would troop with the accusing throng, he must himself become one of them, must himself become an accuser—an accuser of the positive kind, not awaiting explanation or proof. He heard the people below crying out at Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff; and, since now his own real convictions were setting against the same officers, might not he also go down and hoot?

His colleagues assenting.

In thus turning against Lord Raglan, and entering on the sinister course for which we now see him preparing, the Duke of Newcastle acted with the ready assent of his colleagues.

Grounds on which the Government might have been expected to give

There were reasons enough why the Ministers—and the more so in this adverse time—should not be deserting their general. They had adjured him, whether approving or not, to invade a province of Russia; and, although perhaps doubting their pru-

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Lord Raglan a loyal support.

dence, he had answered them with the Alma campaign. Step by step they had followed, and step by step had approved the joint strategy of the Alliance, greeting even what was called 'the flank march' with vehement, unmeasured praise. They now saw their general hampered and gravely imperilled, yet still under the ægis of victory, for 'Inkerman' had not been reversed by any later engagement. If before, in imagination, and with the glow of just pride, they had followed the chief into action, they now saw his spirit sustain itself under a heavier kind of trial, and radiate into the hearts of his soldiery with a power which guarded his camp against the approach of despair. For their hopes of a fortunate issue out of battles to come, the Ministers put faith in their general, and so, they knew, did our army, and besides—a thing of great moment—the army of our French allies. It is true, there was need that the general, whilst able to lead, should be one who could also administer; but no member of the Government could help knowing well that, if Lord Raglan was the Lord Fitzroy Somerset of the Wellington campaigns, he was also the Lord Fitzroy Somerset of later days, pre-eminent in our State departments for his mastery of official work. The Cabinet knew that Lord Raglan had a closer, a more accurate acquaintance with the labyrinth of our army administration than any other man living, and that in the transaction of military business under normal conditions he was unsurpassed; but, moreover, they had now also learnt that, when normal conditions failed, and

a sudden emergency arose, he could meet it at the instant with admirable vigour, breaking through all the trammels of custom, and converting himself for the moment into a second War Minister, so that not one day should be lost in providing for the wants of his men.* The Cabinet, moreover, believed with unvarying confidence that for the performance of one truly momentous duty—namely, that of upholding the Anglo-French Alliance by the maintenance of good relations with General Canrobert—the chief at the head of our army was peculiarly, matchlessly qualified.

Here, then, there seemed to be found in one richly-gifted commander an almost ideal assemblage of those many and various conditions which a Ministry, watching over their general in a time of trouble and peril, must have yearned to see him fulfil. What honour, but also what policy and common-sense dictated, was plainly that to such a commander, whilst engaged in mortal strife with the enemy on a distant shore, the Queen's Government should give an unstinted and thoroughly loyal support, taking care not to harbour a thought of assenting to any outcry against him without first hearing his answer to what the accusers might say.

But then Ministers, after all, were frail mortals; and, apart from the genuine exigencies of the public service, they felt the pressing need of the moment—

* This sentence alludes to the measures (see *ante*, chap. vii.) by which Lord Raglan found means to replace the vast stores of warm clothing and other supplies wrecked and lost in the hurricane of the 14th November.

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The need of finding some one to blame.

The process by which Ministers brought their minds to the notion of casting off the blame from themselves;

the need there was of accounting for what had gone wrong by finding some one to blame. The Duke of Newcastle could with truth tell his colleagues that, so far as he knew, he had not himself been guilty of any disastrous omission; but no enquiry was made amongst the dispersed London offices with the purpose of learning whether any of them had been receiving demands from the seat of war, and if so, whether all such demands had been fully and promptly met. By crossing a single street, the Duke of Newcastle might have learnt that the default after all was in London; but he gave himself no such enlightenment, and therefore both he and his colleagues were able to go on imagining that the very reverse was true. Believing, though wrongly, that there was no default in London, both the Duke and the rest of the Cabinet went on to infer that the delinquency, whatever it was, must be in the Crimea — must be at the English headquarters; and — unwilling at first to lay blame on Lord Raglan himself — they grasped so eagerly at the expedient of impugning his staff, as to become, what now I must call them—that is, hasty, reckless accusers.

and throwing it on Lord Raglan's Staff officers.

With the many and painful anecdotes we saw pouring in upon the War Minister, there were naturally interspersed loose opinions, finding fault with men in authority; and the Duke himself at this time was so confused in his notions of our military system as to be in a very apt state for receiving the ideas of tormentors who not only came to tell

him of troubles in port, and troubles in camp, but also, in many an instance, proceeded to judgment, saying confidently that the particular mischief which he or she described was the fault of the Adjutant or the Quartermaster General.* In the opinions thus loosely given and loosely received, the Duke confirmed himself by making two curious mistakes. Forgetting once more the dispersed state of our manifold London war offices, he imagined that, because he knew of no requisitions sent home from the Crimea by the Adjutant and Quartermaster Generals, none such could have really come in;† and it occurred to him that this supposed absence of demands by two members of the Headquarter Staff might be used as a proof of their inattention to the wants of the army. His next mistake was that of attributing to the same two officers the deficiency of land-transport.‡ Upon

* I infer the confused state of the Duke's impressions at this time from the error mentioned in the next footnote.

† General Airey was so far from having omitted to send home requisitions that, *on one day*—viz., the 28th of November 1854—he sent home requisitions for, *inter alia*, the following things: 100 hospital marquees, 3000 tents, 7000 camp-kettles, 2500 spades, 2500 shovels, 2500 pickaxes, 2500 felling axes, 2500 saws, 6000 nose-bags, and 3000 reaping-hooks; and, indeed, his requisitions altogether were so vast and so many that the fact of his having been censured by a War Minister for making no requisitions at all becomes a 'Whitehall curiosity.' Irrespectively of these requisitions, all duly sent home to London, his department, with the sanction of Lord Raglan, effected vast purchases at Constantinople, there obtaining, with happy promptitude, huge supplies of warm clothing, of tarpauling, and of tools, together with 4700 camp-kettles, and numberless other supplies. The great supplies of timber (planks and scantling) which General Airey obtained, were drawn from various parts of the Levant.

‡ Duke of Newcastle to Lord Raglan, 29th December 1854.—It is curious that the Duke should have been administering the depart-

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grounds thus weak, or, to speak more exactly, thus null, he founded his charges against the Adjutant and Quartermaster Generals. By sending an enquiry to the right office, the Duke might have soon learnt his error on the subject of requisitions; and indeed, would have not only found that abundant demands from the Crimea had come in long ago, but that the requisitions of the Quartermaster-General alone (although made for things perfectly simple) had proved greater than London could meet within any fair compass of time;* whilst a message sent to the Treasury, or a glance at the Commissariat handbook, would have averted the mistake he committed on the subject of land-transport.

The course of action attempted by the Government.

However, the Duke and his colleagues omitted the simple steps requisite for the dispersion of their errors, and they now, they thought, saw their way to a feasible course of action. They, indeed, had the wisdom to be convinced—and this, unless I mistake, by the opportune counsels of Mr Gladstone—that, at a time when Lord Raglan's army stood engaged in

ment many months without knowing that the business of providing for the land-transport rested with the Commissariat. Lord Raglan, in his reply, had to explain this to him as though to a pupil, at the very beginning of his administrative studies.

* We before saw (see *ante*, chap. v. sect. 3) that although General Airey's requisition for three thousand tents was made by him in November 1854, the London officials, with all the resources of England at their command, proved unable to meet it until the May of the following year! Even then they did not meet the requisition completely; and indeed, during that month of May 1855, I find one of the departments corresponding with another of the London offices on the subject of the still continuing delays, and endeavouring to account for them.

close strife against a powerful enemy, they could not well wrench from him violently his two chief Head-quarter officers by a sheer exertion of power; but, strange to say, they imagined they could make him assent to the change. That first object attained, they at once would take their next step. They would force Lord Hardinge (the Commander-in-Chief) to remove from their posts both the Adjutant and Quartermaster Generals;* and, instead of casting blame openly upon Lord Raglan himself, would make him, if so one may speak, a 'quasi-constitutional 'sovereign' who, in theory, 'can do no wrong,' but still must submit, when required, to an enforced 'change of Ministry!'

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Their fanciful plan.

Here, then, we come upon something that we have heard of before—namely, that very charter which the great reigning journal propounded on the 23d of December. Whether the coincidence of opinion was fortuitous, or resulted from any interchange of ideas between Whitehall and Blackfriars, I do not undertake to judge; nor, indeed, can I say at all surely whether this quaint expedient of applying 'constitu-'tional' doctrine to a general engaged in the field owed its origin to the Queen's Government, or to what many then regarded as the absolutely dictating journal.† My surmise is, however, that in choos-

Question with whom this originated.

* With respect to their power to do this, see *ante*, chap. iii.

† I scarce think that the question can be answered decisively by appealing to dates; for although the quaint scheme, as a whole, may be said to have been first propounded by the 'Times' (on the 23d of December), the Duke of Newcastle's letters of the 18th and 22d show him previously taking some steps which tended in the same direction.

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ing this fanciful course some Minister or Ministers led, whilst, for once, the great journal followed.

The conductors of such a print as the 'Times' would hardly, I think, have begun to asperse Lord Raglan with virulence, unless they had known that the Government was turning against him; so that, if my conjecture be sound, the newspaper storm, after all, was a fury set loose, though unwittingly, by Ministers failing in loyalty towards their general engaged in the field. But it did not, of course, at all follow that a statesman, though swerving himself from the path which right feeling dictated, might not be sincerely revolted by the excesses of writers who were undertaking to 'strengthen his 'hands;' and I see that the Duke of Newcastle thus wrote to Lord Raglan: 'If anything could add to 'the pain of writing anything which could give you 'annoyance, it would be the fact that I am called 'upon to do so at a moment when you have been so 'unfairly and ungenerously attacked by the ruffianly '"Times." That I have no sympathy with these 'attacks, I believe you will readily admit.'

The Duke of Newcastle privately lamenting the excesses of the 'Times.'

If it was right that the excesses of the great journal against a general in the field should be

The uselessness of such a lamentation.

The Duke's impression seems to have been, that the attack upon our Headquarters was originated by himself on the 18th, but he apparently feared that he might be accused (though erroneously) of following the great journal, for after speaking of the personal attacks which the 'Times' had made on Lord Raglan, he adds: 'I should at first have 'written publicly as well as privately, if the sudden outbreak of that 'most versatile paper had not made me anxious to avoid the semblance 'of shifting the blame from my own shoulders to those of others.' —Private letter to Lord Raglan, 8th January 1855.

denounced by the Secretary of State, there can hardly, I suppose, be a question that the rebuke should have been public, and delivered with all the weight of official authority. By offering a sort of condolence to Lord Raglan in private, the Duke of course ran no risk of incurring newspaper vengeance, and on the other hand, did nothing at all towards vindicating the assailed commander. The occasion was not one to be met by a clandestine fling at the 'Times.'

The Duke of Newcastle executing his plan of attack.

The Duke of Newcastle proceeded to execute his plan of attack.* On the 18th of December, he addressed Lord Raglan (upon the non-delivery of regimental baggage) in terms approaching to censure;* and three days later, he commenced a series of letters distinctly importing blame. In the first of these, dated the 22d of December, he openly disclosed his belief that a 'want of system and organisation' prevailed 'in all the departments of the camp.' On the 25th, he wrote yet more strongly to the same effect, declaring that there appeared to be 'carelessness amongst the higher departments,' which required vigorous correction. On the 29th he returned to the subject, writing even more vituperatively than before, and in a yet closer pursuance of the ordained course of action, his diatribes now drew to a focus; for, basing himself on the curious mistakes before indi-

* On the 11th, the Duke had written complainingly about the reported state of the camp; but I follow his guidance in taking the 18th as the day when what he considered his inculpatory remarks began; for, writing in January, he places their commencement 'after the middle of last month.'

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cated, he distinctly charged Lord Raglan's Adjutant and Quartermaster Generals with inattention to the duties of their departments, and even went the strange length of making his accusations in positive terms, without first hearing what might be said by the Commander of the Forces, under whose very eyes the two officers in question were working! To such excesses might a public man go in his eagerness to expiate the sins of Whitehall by finding victims in camp!

On the first day of the new year, the Duke wrote more excitedly, saying that the reported instances of mismanagement were creating a ferment in the public mind, which would 'soon find a vent in a burst of 'unreasoning violence;' and he added: 'I shall, of 'course, be the first victim to popular vengeance; and 'the papers, assisted by the Tory and Radical parties, 'have pretty well settled my fate already. . . . 'But more victims will be required. You and I 'will come first, but those who are most to blame in 'these matters will not escape. . . . I confess I 'blush for a country which has sent out such a fleet 'of steam-transports, and cannot find people who 'know how to use them. I cannot say how it pains 'me to write all this to you. Gladly would I spare 'you a participation in the bitter anxiety which I 'suffer day by day from such neglect of duty by 'those who ought to know how to perform it, but I 'cannot remain silent till either remedy is found, or 'some other person relieves me of the painful duty 'of trying to cure such evils.'

At length, under the advice of some of the Duke's colleagues, the complaints of the Government were thrown into the form of an official despatch bearing date the 6th of January. And this last measure was not without import, for it enabled the Ministers to defend themselves against apprehended attacks, by proving, if need be, that they, too, no less than the journalists, had already become the accusers of Lord Raglan and the Headquarter Staff.*

This despatch was beyond measure wordy, and less precise in its terms than the letters we have been quoting; but its main object was to cast blame on the military administration in the Crimea, to enjoin vigorous reform, and call for special reports from several of the Headquarter Departments.

In his subsequent private letters, the Duke of Newcastle continued to urge that Lord Raglan would assent to the removal of his Adjutant and Quarter-master Generals.

The feeling of Lord Raglan upon finding himself and his Staff assailed by the Queen's Government.

Lord Raglan had foreseen, nay, foretold that the unmeasured joy of our people when under the spell of a newly-won victory would be followed by public displeasure, and he tranquilly held himself ready to be portioned with obloquy instead of the boundless gratitude that had been promised in the month of October; but the conquest last achieved by public clamour was one that he had not thought possible.

* When once put into official form, the accusations, of course, might some day be laid before Parliament. However, the reason for this increasingly hostile step, which the Duke assigned when addressing Lord Raglan, was a wish to 'strengthen' his 'hands.'

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He well understood that the outcry would be likely to carry with it the people and the House of Commons; but that hostile critics assailing him should make a proselyte of the Queen's Government with which he had been all along acting in close, friendly, intimate counsel—this was more than he could see without amazement and grief. Nor indeed was it wholly from sense of wrong done to himself that he suffered the pain he did. He loved the monarchy of England, seeing in it grand principles where many only saw fictions, and apparently there was something revolting to him in the spectacle of the Queen's Government coming down, as it were, into the street to join in assailing the commander of the Queen's army, and the devoted officers at his side, whilst engaged in a trying campaign.

His answers to the Duke of Newcastle.

Whether answering the inculpatory letters or the inculpating despatch, Lord Raglan used the same tone. He owned the bitter pain he endured under the accusations levelled against him by his Queen's Government, and then proceeded to meet them with high spirit, with frankness, with dignity, with overmastering knowledge. He set aside the Ministerial notion of offering him shelter behind his chief Staff officers at Headquarters by showing that they not only worked under his very eye and under his immediate orders, but had earned and were earning his absolute, unqualified, and warm approval. He informed the Government that he regarded their censures as importing a withdrawal of the confidence with which they before had supported him; but at the same

time he formed a resolve which was worthy of himself and of the great man whose example he loved to keep before him. He determined not to harbour the idea of resigning his command. The Ministry, he knew very well, might force Lord Hardinge to order him home, but he resolved that nothing short of an actual recall should withdraw him from the command of his army in its time of trouble.

In answering the Duke's letter of the 22d of December, he wrote: 'Your concluding observations 'are most painful to me. My whole day and a good 'part of the night are devoted to the discharge of 'my duty. I am ably seconded by the Adjutant 'and Quartermaster Generals, and the business to 'which your remarks are addressed more particu-'larly belong to the Department of the latter. I 'must in justice say that his [General Airey's] well-'directed exertions are unceasing.' * 'If these severe 'observations are intended to apply to the staff 'officers of the army, I positively and distinctly 'deny their accuracy, and must testify to their 'zeal, ability, and unceasing devotion to their 'duty. They have hardly any rest.' † 'I can ar-'rive at no other conclusion than that I no longer 'enjoy your confidence. This, which is strongly im-'pressed on my mind, I cannot but regard as a heavy 'misfortune, and as calculated to increase the diffi-'culties and add very seriously to the anxieties of 'my present position, the only alleviation to which

* Private letter to Duke of Newcastle, 6th January 1855.

† Ibid., 13th January 1855.

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'has been the countenance and support which you 'have hitherto invariably manifested towards me. 'My duty, however, to the Queen will induce me to 'persevere in doing my best to carry on the service 'to the utmost of my ability apart from all personal 'considerations. . . . It is with the deepest 'concern that I observe that, upon the authority of 'private letters, you condemn Generals Airey and 'Estcourt, and the Staff generally, and this without 'reference to me, or the expression of a desire to 'have my opinion of their qualifications or imputed 'deficiencies. I have been conversant with public 'business nearly half a century, and I have never yet 'known an instance of such condemnation before. 'The officers above-named are perfectly efficient. I 'am witness to their daily labours, their constant 'toil, and I can with truth say that they merit the 'tribute of my warmest approbation. General Airey, 'whose duties cover a wider surface and are more 'continuously in operation than those of his colleague, 'is a very able man, and particularly qualified, ac- 'cording to my humble judgment, for the post he 'occupies, and I consider myself most fortunate in 'having him in the situation of Quartermaster- 'General. Am I, or are the writers of private letters 'in the better position to pronounce upon his merits? '. . . You must pardon me for adding that I 'can only regard your adoption of the imputations 'against these officers' [the officers of the Head- quarter Staff generally] 'as an indirect reflection on 'myself, and an indication that you consider me in-

'capable of judging of departmental officers, the chief 'of whom receive their orders from me.'*

'I cannot say how all these attacks' [attacks on his Staff] 'annoy me, and add to my anxieties, and those 'are far from being few. . . . The reflections 'which that despatch contains upon the military staff 'of the army, founded upon information given by 'irresponsible persons, apparently wholly ignorant of 'the service, have wounded me deeply, and make me 'feel the insecurity of the position of any officer 'entrusted with important duties, and that he is 'liable to condemnation without enquiry.'† 'It can-'not fail to be a satisfaction to your Grace to be 'informed that the Staff are not chargeable with the 'grave offences attributed to them, but are able, 'zealous, and industrious public servants, devoting 'themselves to their duty, and to that exclusively, 'and therefore entitled to my approbation and 'support.'‡

In answer to a letter in which the Duke of Newcastle proposed that General Airey should be appointed to the command of a Division, Lord Raglan wrote: 'I have in my several letters expressed my 'most entire confidence in General Airey; and, as 'in your private letter of the 8th, you ask, "Would 'it not be a good change to give General Airey a 'Division?" I deem it necessary not to lose another

* Private letter to Duke of Newcastle, 15th January 1855.

† Ibid., 20th January 1855.

‡ Despatch to Secretary of State, No. 164, 30th January 1855, in answer to the official despatch, No. 202, of the 6th of January.

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'moment in saying that, if he be removed from the 'appointment of Quartermaster-General, a very great 'injury would be inflicted on the service and on my- 'self personally. I should have the greatest difficulty 'in getting on without him. I consider his services 'invaluable. We are in communication with each 'other all the day long, and no two men could get 'on better together. His work is so constant and 'laborious that I am astonished he has recovered 'from his severe illness as well as he has done.'*

The Duke of Newcastle was pained by the firmness with which Lord Raglan persisted in supporting his Staff officers against the attacks of the Queen's Government; and — at the risk of his words being construed into something like an avowal of ugly motives—he acknowledged that he felt 'great con- 'cern at the unequivocal terms in which the Com- 'mander had expressed his entire approval of the 'Quartermaster-General's Department.' Such a sentence, if hastily read, might seem to import that its writer was undergoing vexation because the chief

* Private letter to Duke of Newcastle, 27th January 1855.—The command of even a brigade had been so satisfactory to General Airey that he did not give it up without much reluctance when Lord Raglan, on the eve of the embarkation, pressed him (in terms which could not be worthily resisted) to take the office of Quartermaster-General; and, it is known that, apart from the considerations of duty and affection which must have prevented General Airey from yielding to the temptation, he would have greatly preferred the command of a Division to his office at Headquarters. The objection to the Duke's proposal was that, however attractive to General Airey the command of a Division would have been, he had become Lord Raglan's 'right-hand man,' and could not be torn from him at such a time without evident and wanton injury to the public service, as well as to Lord Raglan himself.

would not shelter himself by sacrificing his Quarter-master-General; but Lord Raglan, I suppose, thought it courteous to avoid putting such a construction upon words which, if taken quite literally, were innocent, though, of course, very odd; and his reply to the Duke was this: 'I cannot conceive why you should 'feel this concern. I should have thought that you 'would have been happy to learn from the man best 'qualified to give a just opinion, and to form a cor-'rect judgment, that I was ably assisted by Major-'General Airey, and perfectly satisfied with the 'manner in which he conducted his duties under 'my directions.'*

Ministers balked in their endeavour to sacrifice Lord Raglan's Staff officers;

By Lord Raglan's determined resistance, the Ministerial plan of choosing victims from out of his Head-quarter Staff was for the moment defeated; and some of the members of the Government now lapsed into a notion that, because the chief refused to sacrifice his Staff officers, he himself, as the responsible head, should be made to bear the blame. But this was a resolve less important than it sounds; for having long been guilty of failing to support their general against the storm of public anger, our Ministers had already exhausted no small part of such power as they had to turn opinion against him;† and the

and throwing blame on Lord Raglan himself;

* To Duke of Newcastle, 10th February 1855.

† The power of a Government to act upon opinion is more limited in England than elsewhere; but there are matters about which an executive must needs appear to know more than the rest of the world; and at a time when the journalists were assailing Lord Raglan with great savageness and persistency, the acquiescence of Ministers was in reality equivalent to a bitter attack on their general.

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course they now took in blaming him (because he would not abet them when casting blame upon others) was robbed of more than half its significance by the fact that they neither recalled him, nor thought of taking any such step.

yet not meditating his recall.

Their reason for not recalling him.

Their reason for not recalling Lord Raglan was one of the most simple kind: They knew of no other human being who, in fitness for the command of our army at that conjuncture, could be for a moment compared to him; and the wonder is that, under such conditions, they did not see their true line of duty—did not see that, engaged as he was in mortal strife against numbers, the general who, so far as they knew, was the best that the whole world could furnish, ought to have from them a loyal support. They need not have been deaf to complaints, and, on the contrary, might have made complaints useful as vehicles of wholesome suggestion, instead of so far adopting them as to constitute themselves the accusers of their general, thus interposing a gulf—a baneful, perilous gulf—between the executive and the head of our army, and oppressing a devoted commander in the midst of his thousand cares with troubles of the same kind as those which a savage litigation inflicts.*

Question why this was not a reason for giving him a loyal support.

* Perhaps the Government might have advantageously sent out to Headquarters a judicious Staff officer who, under Lord Raglan's directions, would have sifted the numberless complaints and criticisms, whether printed or appearing in manuscript. In some, the winnowing officer would have found suggestions deserving to be submitted to the chief; whilst in others he might have seen charges which it would be well for the Government to answer with means furnished to it from Headquarters.

After failing in the way we have seen to bind other victims for sacrifice, our Government, with nothing to shelter it, lay open to the coming attack.

V.

Motion in House of Commons for a Committee of Enquiry.

Upon the reassembling of Parliament on the 23d of January 1855, the House of Commons quickly proved itself to be animated with the anger of the country at large; and Mr Roebuck gave notice of motion for a Committee, to be charged with a task thus defined: 'To enquire into the condition of our 'army before Sebastopol, and into the conduct of 'those Departments of the Government whose duty 'it has been to minister to the wants of that 'army.' Before the motion came on, Lord John Russell resigned.

On the 26th of January, Mr Roebuck moved for his Committee. It chanced that, owing to illness, the speech he had intended to make was cut short in an early stage; but the House was so eager, and already so full of the subject, that this incident did not mar the debate, and may even, perhaps, have helped to insure the success of the motion.*

Resignation of Lord Aberdeen's Government.

After lengthened discussion, the motion was carried by a majority of 157. Thereupon Lord Aberdeen's Government resigned.

* In the course of the debate Mr Disraeli said he imagined that by sitting down after simply reading his motion, the mover had adopted the best expedient for insuring its success.

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Formation of Lord Palmerston's Government.

After making three successive appeals, the first to Lord Derby, the second to Lord Lansdowne, and the third to Lord John Russell, the Crown at length acquiesced in an opinion already formed by the country, and entrusted to Lord Palmerston the charge of forming an administration.

It was rightly taken for granted that Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Newcastle would remain out of office; but impelled by highly honourable motives, these two fallen Ministers addressed themselves to their friends and late colleagues belonging to what was called in those days the 'Peelite' connection, and succeeded in persuading Sir James Graham, Mr Gladstone, Mr Sidney Herbert, and Mr Cardwell to take part in the new Government; so that, in spite of the late resignation, the actual removal of Ministers brought about by the vote of the House of Commons was confined after all to the change which made Lord Palmerston Prime Minister instead of Lord Aberdeen, and Lord Panmure Secretary of State for War instead of the Duke of Newcastle.

The two displaced Ministers:

Lord Aberdeen.

Of the part taken in the conduct of the war by the two Ministers thus displaced, a few words perhaps ought to be said. Lord Aberdeen was not so constituted as to be a foreseeing, propelling, initiating, perturbing Minister, well qualified to lead the warlike efforts of a country long negligent of its military duties, or to make up by brain-power for the amazing tardiness of his military preparations;* but at all events, he had the negative merit of not hampering

* Seb. Comm. Rep., Question 21,287 *et seq.*

the Duke of Newcastle in his administration of the War Department. CHAP. IX.

The zeal of the Duke of Newcastle drove him to send out the fated word, to send out the fated man, to send out the fated gift which unhappily were fitted to change what might otherwise have proved a swift conquest into a painful, lengthened siege;* but, to charge him with want of vigour was unjust. From the spring of 1854 until the time of his fall, the despatches and private letters delivered with every mail kept him always in close counsel with Lord Raglan upon the business of the war; so that, to be acquainted with the correspondence thus incessantly passing between the Minister and the general during a period of some ten months, is to know — to know with minuteness—how the Duke did the work of his department; and whoever in this way has measured the zeal, the devotion, the industry with which he pursued his hard task, must refuse, I think, to believe that his administrative efforts were weak. What casts a real shade on the memory of the Duke of Newcastle is—not any administrative mismanagement of the graver sort, still less any slackening of energy, but—his unhappy demeanour when falling—his clutch, if so one may speak, at the generous, the thoughtful adviser who—because an accomplished administrator whilst also

The Duke of Newcastle.

* The word was *siege* ('lay siege to Sebastopol'), and belonged to the cluster of momentous phrases which, having crept in with the 'redaction' of the despatch, were unwittingly assented to by the sleeping Cabinet; the man was *Burgoyne*, the gift was *the siege-train*.

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the commander of our army—had been able to do more than any other living man towards enlightening the Minister's path.

General import of the change of Ministry.

Upon the whole, it may be said that, so far as concerned its bearing upon the subsequent conduct of the war, the good that plainly resulted from this modification of the Government did not lie so distinctly in the Ministerial changes themselves, but rather in what they expressed. The substitution of Lord Palmerston for Lord Aberdeen expressed on the part of the country a determination to be hearty and strenuous in the conduct of the war; whilst the fate of the Duke of Newcastle, sent back into private life, was at once a sacrifice and a warning—a sacrifice of the victim not shown to be guilty, but (like the ram slain by Abraham) opportunely caught in a thicket, and therefore offered up in expiation of what our troops had endured—a warning to any future administrator, saying sharply, if not even brutally, that in work so momentous as the due supply of our army, he must not only act irreproachably, but also contrive not to fail.

VI.

The war measures of the new Government.

The new Government soon announced several measures for the better carrying on of the war. They recalled Sir John Burgoyne, and appointed General Harry Jones to succeed him. They began to reorganise our land-transport service under Colonel

M'Murdo. They instructed two Commissioners, Sir John M'Neill and Colonel Tulloch, to go out to the Crimea, and there visit our Commissariat system with a rigid enquiry.* They undertook to clear and remodel our military hospitals on the shores of the Bosphorus; and with the object of thence bringing home sick and wounded men, they organised a direct communication between Scutari and England. They also sent out Commissioners who, for the purpose of sanitary improvement, were to enquire and report upon the state of our camps. These measures, together with one respecting the age of recruits, and another which will be by-and-by stated, were announced in the House of Lords on the 16th of February by Lord Panmure, the new Secretary of State for War.†

In yet one other matter which, although perhaps seeming trivial, yet touched the very life of our army, a change of great moment took place. From a day no less early than the 13th of September in the previous year, our Commissary-General had been incessantly asking the Treasury to send him out cargoes of hay, without having his requests duly met; but, supported as they were by Lord Raglan again and again and again, these prayers for forage, more forage, were at length better heard in White-

* By a supplemental instruction, they were afterwards directed to extend their enquiry to the delays that had taken place in the unshipment and delivery of clothing, and other army stores.

† He seems to have announced them as new, but several of them, and in particular the two first, had been initiated by the Duke of Newcastle.

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hall. The change of Government was followed after a very short interval by a sudden and great increase of the quantities of hay despatched to the Crimea from England; and I am the more willing to lay stress on this truly good service, since it happens that what next must be spoken of is conduct of such a kind as to leave an ill mark on the character of Lord Palmerston's administration.

Continued anger of our people.

Far from being appeased by the fall of only a couple of Ministers, the public anger raged fiercer than ever; and the order of the House of Commons for the appointment of a Committee seemed to furnish the very machinery by which an indignant people might usurp perhaps more or less absolutely the direction of the war and with it the control of our army.

Fear that they might usurp a control over the military power.

Question how the new Government should satisfy the public anger.

The desire to avert such a change became one of the motives impelling Lord Palmerston's Government to endeavour towards satisfying the public anger; but how was this to be done by an administration which had the defect of being so nearly identical with the one just cashiered? Should they still trust their general, or rather should they bow their heads to the newspapers, and shamelessly turn against him? It might seem at first sight that between two such courses of action they had simply an alternative choice; so that, if taking one of them, they needs must forego the other. But, strange to say, they took both. They were far from being statesmen so lost to all idea of patriotism as to be capable of withdrawing from the command of our

Their determination.

army a chief upon whom the whole fate of the Allies was depending; but still they had not the fibre enabling them to meet all this outcry with a resolute front. So, upon the whole, they acted thus: They retained Lord Raglan in the command of our army; but then, also, they ignobly left him unshielded by any good word of theirs against his rampant accusers, and even themselves took a part in hooting their absent general still engaged in close strife with the enemy; whilst, moreover, from his Headquarter Staff they resolved to choose the fresh 'victims' required for appeasing our people.* CHAP. IX.

The whole Cabinet of course was responsible for any determination affecting the command of our army; but the actual framer of the despatch in which they agreed to assail Lord Raglan was more pointedly answerable for its language than his merely assenting colleagues.†

Lord Panmure—long known as Fox Maule—had been peculiarly circumstanced in early life. When about seventeen years old, a headstrong, tyrannical father had driven him to make a choice which—like the one famed in old Greece—was to be be- Lord Panmure.

* The word 'victim' as applied to men politically sacrificed, was freely used in those days with little or no thought of irony, but rather as a terse and business-like expression which aptly conveyed the meaning.

† The difference between the responsibility of him who framed the despatch and of those who only assented to it was very great, because the assenters had some right to take it for granted that their colleague —himself a Cabinet Minister—would not be bringing charges against the general which were liable to be signally refuted upon the arrival of the return mail.

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tween pleasure and virtue. Upon condition of submitting to absolute estrangement from his mother, the lad was to have before him a world of ease, luxury, and enjoyment, with a prospect of a seat for the county. If rejecting the condition, he was to take a commission in a line regiment, with a pittance so cruelly gauged that, instead of enabling him to 'live,' it would only serve to keep him alive. The Scotch Hercules made his choice bravely, and was held with great rigour to the threatened conditions, but it seems that the effect of the 'virtue' combined with privation was to make him beyond measure savage; and the improving society of his young brother officers did not save him from growing up to be a churl. However, at last, after many a year, when a death and the law of entail had ended his thraldom, he quitted the army, and had the vigour to do what he could towards supplying his recognised deficiencies by a course of diligent study. He afterwards entered Parliament, and disclosing a great capacity for work, became in time 'Secretary 'at War.' The duties he thus assumed were not of such kind as to give him much latitude for the exercise of his judgment;* but they brought him into frequent communication upon matters of army business with the great Duke of Wellington, and also with Lord Fitzroy Somerset.

Owing partly perhaps to a habit of meditating upon the attributes of his father, Fox Maule was

* As to the nature of the office presided over by the Secretary *at* War, see *ante*, chap. iii.

mighty in curses, not simply and gently accentuating thought with a 'damn,' like the shrewd, reflective Lord Melbourne, but arming himself with maledictions in an aggressive spirit, as though he would somehow wreak his vengeance upon many a hecatomb for the usage he had received in his youth. Rough-tongued and rough-mannered in the midst of courteous people, he was formidably equipped for attack; but his resources in the way of defence were even more efficacious, for nature had so thickly encased him as to make his mental skin quite impervious to the delicate needle-points with which a highly-bred gentlefolk is accustomed to correct its offenders. With all his roughness and violence, it would seem he had no base malignity, and was more, after all, the rhinoceros than the tiger of Palmerston's Cabinet.

He was not without friends, of whom some still remember him kindly; and they like attributing to him those sterling, manful qualities which would harmonise with his acknowledged defects; so that after, for instance, admitting his roughness and violence, they fondly pronounce him strong-willed. Their conclusions are perhaps sustained by a survey of Lord Panmure's character as disclosed in a long course of years; but I never myself knew him personally, and besides, am so circumstanced, that a part of his career which perhaps may have been the least worthy is the very one brought before me, and this too, under the light—the intensely strong, pitiless light—afforded by his own writings. *

* Knowing closely one part of this Minister's career, but still only a

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Judging only from his conduct and words during this confined period—a period of less than five months—I must own that, instead of strong will, I discern through the roughness and violence a man quite as tame under pressure as statesmen in free countries should be. I indeed see him guilty of frivolous, reckless injustice, not unmingled with actual rudeness, towards an absent commander, but still proving sufficiently flexible under stress of the political lever, and submissive—beyond measure, submissive—to the then over-dominant power—that is, to the power of the press.* He seems to have retained strong soldierly instincts; but if some of these tend towards good fighting, there are others that tend towards obedience; so that if, for instance, a soldier

part, and that, too, a small, ugly part of it, I no more make pretension to understand his true character than would or could Sir Thomas Lucy—thinking always of the trespasser who invaded his park, and never of Othello or Hamlet—to appreciate the whole nature of Shakespeare; and it is fair that the judgment of personal friends long acquainted with this rugged Minister should either weigh heavily against my unfavourable conclusions, or at least be accepted as testimony strongly tending to prove that Lord Panmure was a man of higher quality than he showed himself to be during that particular period which began on the 12th of February 1855, and ended in the following June.

* In ultimately foregoing his resistance to the prosecution of the Parliamentary enquiry sought by Mr Roebuck's motion, Lord Panmure no doubt acted conscientiously, and perhaps also wisely, but certainly strength of will was not the quality he disclosed. On the 12th of February, he wrote: 'I think it impossible to carry on the Government 'unless the House of Commons put down Mr Roebuck's Committee;' and four of his colleagues, Sir James Graham, Mr Gladstone, Mr Sidney Herbert, and Mr Cardwell stood so fast to that very resolve that rather than abandon it they resigned (see *post*, p. 351), but Lord Panmure did not. About ten days after his resolve of the 12th of February, he abandoned it, saying it was 'useless to resist the storm, 'we must try and guide it.'—Private letter, February 23d.

however valiant and resolute, be once disarmed and made prisoner, he will commonly accept his fate, and obey any marching orders he receives from the enemy with a readiness not always exhibited by a captured civilian. At the time I am speaking of, the bearing of Lord Panmure towards the press was a good deal like that of a soldier taken prisoner by the enemy. He received his marching orders submissively from the sheets of the 'Times,' proceeded at once to obey them, and so trudged doggedly on, without giving other vent to his savageness than a comfortable oath and a growl. Whilst he trudged, he would even explain to any less docile fellow-prisoner how vain and foolish it was to dream of attempting resistance.

No humble subordinate employed by the great news-dealing company could well have proved more tractable in their hands than did the new chief of the War Department. What the 'Times' had been enjoining he made it his first task to do. What the 'Times' had asserted, he held must be taken as true until the contrary were shown, and in the meantime might be used as the basis of a set accusation. He even maintained that the public clamour directed against Lord Raglan's most highly valued officers, should of itself suffice to disqualify them. It is true, he from time to time showed that he savagely hated the yoke which he thought himself forced to bear; and I observe that, after bringing himself to write a despatch which was the very echo of what the great journal ordained, he indulged him-

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self with a fling at the power he had strictly obeyed by calling it 'the villainous "Times."' But one must not forget that he made good his obedience to the newspaper by an act of State fraught with State consequences; whilst his little malediction—doing no good or harm to anybody—crept humbly into the sheet of a merely private letter.

We shall presently have to see that, as regards questions of right and wrong, and questions of what might be fitting and what might be unseemly, Lord Panmure, on the 12th of February, chose to govern his acts by a standard much lower than the one most in use; and it might be said that to a Secretary of State thus strangely offending one ought to apply some hard word without more ado. But there is an air of simple candour in the man's avowal of motive which almost compels one to believe that he had the approval of his own misleading conscience; and that, wild and rash as his deviations were, he sincerely regarded them as warrantable and even useful excursions from the straight path. It is right besides to acknowledge that his wild attack on Lord Raglan was perpetrated by a single despatch, and that from several portions of his correspondence, no less than from the testimony of many who knew him well, there may be gathered fair reasons for believing him to have been a man of other and better quality than could be inferred from the course he adopted at the time of acceding to office. In the eyes of his friends, unrepelled by the faults of demeanour that hedged round his genuine nature, he was always, they gladly

declare, of the quality belonging to those who have in them nothing ignoble;* but I must own that—not having their means of piercing through the husk of his character—I can only keep down the repugnance which his conduct towards Lord Raglan provokes by ascribing it to bodily ailment. There is some foundation for thinking that the language he unhappily addressed to the general commanding our army owed its source, after all, to the unseen approach of a malady which soon afterwards disclosed itself plainly by crippling the sufferer's right hand. If acquainted with the singular missive of the 12th of February, and with the state of its writer soon afterwards when stricken by manifest gout, the modern physician, it seems, would be likely to hold that the cause of the patient's affliction, as disclosed by his swollen joints, was the same as the one that —when only assailing the brain, and not recognised yet as disease—had goaded him, a few weeks before, into writing the unseemly despatch.†

* Mr Henry Grenfell (before entering Parliament) served under Lord Panmure as his private secretary, and is one to whose opinion I cannot help attaching great weight. In the following thoughtful words, he says of his old chief that he was 'a thorough gentleman, 'violent, absolute, and strong-willed. Very impatient of contradiction, 'and conscious of the disadvantages under which he laboured from a 'want of polish which his antecedents prevented him from attaining, 'and which was possessed by all those among whom he sat, he still 'was in heart and conduct a *homo generosus*.'

† In one instance known to me, a sagacious physician inferred the access of gout from signs of mental disturbance, and within a few weeks, the accuracy of his diagnosis was proved; for the malady breaking out visibly assailed one of the sufferer's limbs. The mental disturbance then ceased, and did not return. The mental disturbance thus caused is not necessarily accompanied by any delusion, and may

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Lord Panmure well provided with means for informing himself upon the business of the campaign.

Upon entering the War Department, Lord Panmure there found the despatches which had passed between his predecessor and Lord Raglan, but also had unstinted access to that large and instructive part of the correspondence which had been carried on in private letters. For any Minister seeking to possess himself of the subject to which his new duties had called him, here was ready at hand a large and well-ordered treasury of the very knowledge required —a treasury abundantly filled with clear, authentic information respecting the operations, the troubles, the wants, and the actual state of our army, all recorded from mail-day to mail-day with faithful, unceasing care.

Did Lord Panmure read and master this amply enlightening correspondence? Strange to say, he did not.*

show itself only in an access of morbid energy, ill directed and ill controlled by the judgment.

* Of the soundness of this very plain negative I hold decisive proof; for first, I see Lord Panmure writing: 'I cannot find that your lordship has been in the habit of keeping H.M.'s Government acquainted 'in a clear and succinct manner with the operations in which you are 'engaged, the progress which you have made in them, and the results 'likely to attend them; your notices of the condition of your army 'are brief and unsatisfactory, and convey little more than is to be 'gathered from the gloomy character of the "morning states;"' and secondly, having before me the two folio volumes comprising Lord Raglan's despatches and private letters to the Duke of Newcastle, I perceive them to be abounding—richly, largely abounding—in that very information which Lord Panmure says he 'cannot find.' It follows that, as stated above, Lord Panmure did not carefully read, did not master the papers in question. I think that, probably, the explanation of this extraordinary neglect is as follows: For enlightenment upon some special subjects recently brought under discussion in the Cabinet, selected portions of Lord Raglan's correspondence had been

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His despatch of the 12th February.

Lord Panmure entertained a belief that the Duke of Newcastle might have avoided condemnation, and averted his fall by turning against Lord Raglan at an earlier period of the campaign;* and—as though firmly minded to commit no such generous error himself—he made an attack on Lord Raglan the very first act of his reign.

Without apparently feeling that enquiry should precede condemnation, without mastering the correspondence which offered him genuine light, and even, strange to say, without waiting for the momentarily expected arrival of Lord Raglan's detailed explanations,† Lord Panmure, on the 12th of February, allowed himself to pen the despatch of which we must now see the purport. In this missive, he required from Lord Raglan explanations accounting for the origin and prolongation of the miseries that afflicted our army. He said he could not find that the Government had been kept informed in a clear, succinct manner with the operations, the progress, or prospects of the campaign; he complained that Lord Raglan's notices of the condition of his army had

confidentially printed; and Lord Panmure perhaps looked at those printed portions only under an impression that they comprised all the material part of the correspondence, and that the rest of the despatches and letters were not worth reading. But whatever the cause, we know with actual certainty that he had at his command a most admirably, clear, and complete repertory of information, and unhappily omitted to master it.

* He, with some *naïveté*, avows this (see *post*) in his despatch of the 19th March.

† Lord Panmure himself says that the Department was momentarily expecting the despatch evoked by the Duke of Newcastle's demand of the 6th of January.

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been brief and unsatisfactory; he directed that fortnightly returns in a new form should be supplied; he adverted to some of those winter troubles upon which, in an earlier chapter, I have carefully dwelt; he professed to be sending out an officer of high rank, who was to test the capabilities of every officer on the general staff of the army, but at once, without waiting for the result of the enquiry he thus meant to institute, he hastened to condemn unheard both the Adjutant and the Quartermaster General, coming down against the last more especially in violent, newspaper language; he attempted some minor criticisms, and finally, advised a new measure—one conceived, some would say, in grim jest—that is, the importation of scavengers from Constantinople.

But the pith of the despatch lay in this scarcely credible clause, addressed to—of all living men!—ay, addressed and sent to Lord Raglan: 'It would 'appear that your visits to the camp were few and 'far between, and your Staff seem to have known as 'little as yourself of the condition of your gallant 'men.'

It was thus that—true to a newspaper, and false to himself no less than to the interests of the public service—a Secretary of State could address the honoured commander then toiling for our army by day and by night with an almost matchless devotion.

The great Duke of Wellington was always a bold and often a violent man, and exalted above other

mortals by the grandeur of his achievements; but would he not rather have died than address such words as those to General Lord Fitzroy Somerset?

Can it happily be shown that the Queen did not sanction this document?

At that time, as now, there reigned in England a Queen; and the sternest of those who uphold constitutional principles will agree for once with the courtiers, will concede that such a despatch as the one of which we are speaking ought not to have left our shores without having first been submitted for the Royal approval. They will even perhaps allow that the opportunity in that way presented would have been one of the best that modern times have afforded for illustrating the grandeur, the usefulness of a kingly office, and will say, too, unless I mistake, that if such a conjuncture had happened in the last preceding reign, a private secretary, of the quality and experience of Sir Herbert Taylor, might have been expected to aid his royal master by some such counsel as this: 'The Cabinet is not advising the king 'to recall the general in command of his army, yet 'proposes, nevertheless, to address to him an official 'despatch containing, amongst others, these words: '"Your Staff seem to have known as little as your-'"self of the condition of your gallant men." The 'king has not learnt that His general has been heard 'upon the grave charge which this condemnation im-'ports. The Cabinet might be asked to reconsider 'the terms of the despatch, and either convert the 'language of actual condemnation into that of en-'quiry, or furnish the king with proofs in support of 'the charge. The Cabinet may be asked to consider

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'the position in which the king would be placed, if '(without first hearing what His general might say in 'defence) he were to sanction this sentence of condem- 'nation as one to be delivered by his Secretary of 'State, and afterwards learn that the charge on which 'it rests is unfounded. And, even if it were war- 'rantable to make the sentence condemnatory in 'substance, the king might rightly demand that it 'should not be abusive in form—might cause it to 'be remembered a little that His general had been 'Lord Fitzroy Somerset.'

Did the storm out of doors sound so loud within the walls of the Palace that no new 'Sir Herbert' was found to utter or write some such counsel? Or, may it not be that some happier solution than this will be given in time to the world?

The despatch, we know, went out unchastened—went out clothed and armed with all the majestic authority which a State could lend to a slander; and of course the bare fact when disclosed brings down reproach on a Polity which failed to render impossible so glaring an outrage; but is there no room for conjecturing that some or one of the accidents so often found baffling the purposes of mortal men may have, after all, caused the omission which led to this ugly result?

It will be well for the monarchy, if any explorer of desks, any searcher of journals and diaries, shall at last prove able to show that some official neglect, or some oversight or mistake in the Palace intercepted the Royal attention to what I have called the pith of this

egregious despatch, and that therefore the act of concurring in Lord Panmure's heedless words may happily prove to be one in which, though the State gravely erred, the Queen herself had no part. CHAP. IX.

The accusations levelled against Lord Raglan and his Staff were not made public, but being conveyed in an official despatch they could be produced at any convenient moment to show how well, how minutely, Lord Panmure was obeying the 'Times;' and meanwhile, there were numberless lanes between Whitehall and Blackfriars by which any well-trusted messenger could carry this proof of allegiance from the Secretary of State to the editor.

Private letter accompanying the despatch.

I have said that the Minister was false to himself, and this not without due authority; for our State ways in England are such that a public servant who sins in an official despatch can record his 'qualm of 'conscience,' or assign his secret motives in a private letter; and Lord Panmure used this resource. After completing his despatch, he took smaller paper and wrote: 'I have most reluctantly come here, not 'that I expect to do any better than my predecessor, 'but because I wish to protect as far as possible the 'interests of the army, and to stand between you and 'those who are so angry at all that has happened.'

. . . . . .

'Some think a Committee should be appointed to 'enquire into the whole management of the army. 'This I wish to avoid for your sake, as you have 'done great and gallant deeds, and I should be sorry 'to be compelled to put such a slight upon you.

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'But your Staff must be changed, as the least that 'will satisfy the public, and that radically.'

. . . . . .

'You have done us great service, nobody could have 'done better in keeping up friendly relations with 'our Allies.'*

Read as proffering an excuse for the coarsely vituperative language which the writer had been using in his despatch, this 'aside' would apparently mean: 'You see I have gone down into the crowd, and like 'the rest of them I am lustily hooting you; but I 'assure you I only do this in order to gain the con-'fidence of the clamourists by making them believe 'that I share their savage anger against you. My 'true object is to baffle them in their wish to inter-'fere with the army, and besides, if I can, to prevent 'them from doing you harm; but, to aid me in this 'little plot you must really throw over your Staff.'†

From the proffer of a clandestine alliance thus made to him by his reckless accuser Lord Raglan turned away in proud silence;‡ and the document to which he addressed himself was the official despatch of the Secretary of State, the authentic paper conveying—however offensively—the mind and the will of his Queen's Government.

* Private letter to Lord Raglan, 12th February 1855.

† Lest it be said that, because not published, the despatch could scarcely have served for any hoodwinking purpose, I must remind the reader that there was nothing to prevent the tenor of it from being confidentially imparted to an editor; and besides, whenever convenient, the Government could publish the despatch.

‡ He does not notice the intimation at all in his answer to the private letter.

He met the burst of ill words, thus a second time levelled against him by the servants of the Crown, with an indignation rather governed than veiled by his native high-breeding, but still with the same steadfast carefulness for the interests of the public service, the same loyal spirit and temper, the same absolute command of his subject which we saw him disclosing before in his answers to the Duke of Newcastle.

Lord Raglan's despatch in answer.

It was on the last day of February that Lord Raglan received the accusing despatch; and, so full, so ready at hand was his knowledge of the whole subject, so great his skill as a writer conducting business of State, that on the next day but one, he had not only completed the voluminous answer demanded by Lord Panmure's questions and censures, but made it what I trust will be deemed a conclusive exposition of the truth—an exposition holding good at all points, yet kept free (with fine taste) from all air of pursuing in triumph the amply refuted Minister.

In this admirable despatch, Lord Raglan showed the source of the embarrassments which had hampered the latter part of the campaign, and the origin, too, of the sickness and of the sufferings which had afflicted our army, but he achieved his whole explanation with an easy, masterful strength, not resembling the strength of mere disputants. Because made to compass a task of great magnitude, the despatch is of necessity long, yet it does not, I think, contain any words that could well be spared.

After speaking of conditions affecting the health

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of our army in the spring and the summer of the previous year, Lord Raglan showed how the sickness afflicting it began at Gallipoli, continued at Scutari, became suddenly virulent in Bulgaria, pursued our troops over the sea, and went on committing its ravages throughout the field operations which preceded the siege of Sebastopol; and then wrote :—

'From the end of September, when the siege operations commenced, to the present time, the troops have been fully and constantly occupied, and though, as the sick increased, and the number of men in the ranks diminished, the force in the trenches was decreased, yet it was impossible, without abandoning the enterprise, and placing the army in extreme danger, to release the troops from the obligation of performing this harassing duty; and, I believe, I incurred some risk in allowing the working and covering parties to be so reduced. Whilst the divisions on the ridge were so engaged, the force left in the valley was busily employed in the throwing up works of defence, and furnishing fatigue parties for Balaclava; and I can distinctly assert that there was no British soldier who had not as much as he could and more than he ought under ordinary circumstances to have been called upon to do.

'The bad weather commenced about the 10th November, and and has continued ever since. A winter campaign is under no circumstances child's-play; but here, where the troops had no cantonments to take shelter in, where large bodies were collected in one spot, and where the want of sufficient fuel soon made itself felt, it told with the greatest severity upon the health, not of the British alone, but of the French and Turkish troops.

'I sent the Duke of Newcastle a paper upon this climate on the 23d of October, and in that document will be found the statement of a gentleman who had resided in the Crimea thirteen years, that the inhabitants, as well as the Russian troops, are obliged to take every precaution for the preservation of their lives in the severe months of the winter; and I, quoting his opinion in my letter of the 23d of October, state that

'"our troops could not during that period remain under canvas,
'"even with great and constant fires; and the country hardly
'"produces wood enough to cook men's food."

'To the severity of the winter the whole army can bear ample 'testimony. The troops have felt it in all its intensity; and when 'it is considered that they have been under canvas from ten to 'twelve months—that they had no other shelter from the sun in 'summer, and no other protection from wet and snow, cold and 'tempestuous winds, such as have scarcely been known even in 'this climate, in winter—and that they passed from a life of total 'inactivity, already assailed by deadly disease, to one of the 'greatest possible exertion,—it cannot be a matter of surprise that 'a fearful sickness has prevailed throughout their ranks, and that 'the men still suffer from it, although I may venture to feel some 'confidence in a somewhat less degree. What I have above 'stated did not check the eagerness of her Majesty's Government 'for the expedition. So far from it, indeed some impatience was 'expressed that, when I wrote to the Minister of War on the '14th August, I was not enabled to name the day on which it 'would take its departure from the coast of Bulgaria.

'The enterprise accordingly took place, and it will suffice to 'say that the landing was effected without opposition, that the 'battle of the Alma was gained, and the march to Balaclava 'accomplished in the space of twelve days. The investment of 'the place on the south side was immediately proceeded with, and 'all the infantry of the army was employed upon it, with the ex-'ception of one battalion.

'In the siege of Sebastopol the British army is still engaged 'in co-operation with that of France.

'Could I withdraw the troops under my command from the 'undertaking, leaving the French to continue it alone? What 'would her Majesty have said? What would have been the feel-'ing of the country if I had announced that I found it necessary 'to make such a sacrifice, and to risk the continuance of the 'alliance which has been so happily established between England 'and France, after ages of strife and rivalry? And if I had deter-'mined upon such a step, could I have acted upon it? Had 'I ships to carry off the troops and their material? Had I can-'tonments to put them in, and to provide them with rest and 'shelter? No such thing. I therefore had but one course to

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'pursue—to persevere through good report and evil report, and 'to endeavour to overcome the difficulties by which I was sur- 'rounded by every possible exertion. This has been the constant 'and unremitting object and study of my life during the dreary 'months that have passed since the winter set in; and if the 'efforts I have made have not been successful, or at least have not 'been appreciated, I have only to regret that the result has been 'so little in accordance with my anxious wishes.

'I have kept her Majesty's Government as accurately informed 'of the operations of the army as was possible under the circum- 'stances, as my despatches and letters to the Duke of Newcastle 'will show. Latterly there has been little to report. The repair 'of a battery, the attempt to clear the trenches of snow or mud, 'are almost all I could have announced. The sickness of the 'army was too clearly shown in the Morning State, which I have 'been in the habit of transmitting; and, moreover, the weekly 'return of sick, which the Inspector-General has forwarded under 'instructions from the Duke of Newcastle, affords as much detail 'upon this painfully interesting subject as I could supply.

'If the Government, on receiving the announcement that the 'expedition was determined upon, had at once sent out reinforce- 'ments, it is probable that I might have been able to employ a 'considerable body of men in converting the track which leads to 'and along this ridge into a stoned road before the weather broke 'up; but the number required to effect so extensive and serious 'a work would have been very great, and I had not an English 'soldier to apply to such a purpose, however important. Some 'time before the bad weather set in, a survey of the road was 'ordered leading from Balaclava, and as many Turks as were 'available were employed in its repair; but their labour was not 'very efficient, and it was not possible to employ them beyond 'Kadiköi, from whence it has been carried on by the French 'troops under General Vinoy, nearly to the heights. No time 'has been lost in providing the troops with warm clothing, since 'any portion of it arrived at Balaclava; and the moment I learnt 'that the Prince was wrecked, I sent a most intelligent officer 'to Constantinople to obtain all he could procure, and his mission 'was successfully fulfilled. The men received the clothing as 'soon as it could be brought up, and they are now, and have been 'for some time, most abundantly supplied. I have already sent

'your lordship a return of what has been issued since the 17th 'November. Winter boots are the only deficiencies, and they 'are issued as they arrive.

'I have called for a statement of the want of medical stores, 'and I will transmit to you Dr Hall's report upon that point as 'soon as I receive it.

'I have obtained fresh vegetables from almost every quarter.

'I have visited the camps as frequently as the constant busi- 'ness in which I am engaged, and which occupies me throughout 'the day and a part of the night, will permit; and though I have 'made no note of those visits, I find from one of my aides-de- 'camp, who keeps a journal, and who frequently, though not 'always, attends me, that he has accompanied me in my rides 'above forty times in the last two months.*

'A ride is not taken for pleasure on this ridge and in this 'weather, and I have not had time to visit the monastery, the 'only spot worth seeing in the whole of the position.

'Your lordship has not hesitated to apply to me the charge that 'I know nothing of the condition of the army, and that the Staff 'is equally ignorant of it. My lord, I do not deserve this re- 'proach, and, in justice to myself, I have to request you to be so 'good as to name the person who has uttered the slander. The 'Staff are equally innocent of it. In my despatch of the 30th 'January, I have fully stated my opinion of Major-General Airey. 'I adhere to that opinion, and in expressing my sense of his 'services, I deem it due to him to state that they were continued 'when he was suffering under severe illness, which he caught in 'the execution of his duty on a wet and tempestuous night.

'Your lordship is doubtless in a position to dispense with the 'services of this or any other Staff officer, but you will permit me 'to observe that I cannot in fairness be called upon to withdraw 'my confidence from, or alter my opinion of, officers whom I hold 'in the highest estimation, and with whom I have always ex- 'pressed myself fully satisfied. If I am deprived of the assistance 'of General Airey, I shall have a serious loss inflicted upon me, 'and the army will be deprived of a most able, active, and zealous

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* The aide-de-camp referred to by Lord Raglan was Colonel Nigel Kingscote.

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'officer, and it will be difficult to find a successor in all respects 'so efficient, and so worthy of my confidence.

'The duties of General Estcourt are less intricate, and do not 'bring him quite so constantly under my notice, but he merits 'the expression of my approbation.

'I will direct the reports your lordship requires to be furnished by the Generals of Division and Brigade, and will take 'steps to form a corps of scavengers. But your lordship is doubtless aware that this ridge is occupied by many thousands besides 'those composing the British army, and that the cleaning the 'camp of the latter will do little to get rid of the ordures which 'cover its surface. Having now replied to the several points in 'your despatch, I must be permitted before I close this to express 'the pain, mortification, and, I might add, surprise with which 'the abuse that has been unscrupulously lavished upon me by 'unavowed and irresponsible parties has been entertained by your 'lordship and your predecessor.

'My lord, I have passed a life of honour. I have served the 'Crown for above fifty years. I have for the greater portion of 'that time been connected with the business of the army. I 'have served under the greatest man of the age more than half 'my life, have enjoyed his confidence, and have, I am proud to 'say, been ever regarded by him as a man of truth and some 'judgment as to the qualifications of officers, and yet, having been 'placed in the most difficult position in which an officer was ever 'called upon to serve, and having successfully carried out difficult 'operations, with the entire approbation of the Queen, which is 'now my only solace, I am charged with every species of neglect, 'and the opinion, which it was my solemn duty to give of the 'merits of officers, and the assertions which I have made in support of it, are set at naught, and your lordship is satisfied that 'your irresponsible informants are more worthy of credit than 'I am.

'Your lordship informs me at the same time, that the Government looks to me for a vigilant and vigorous administration of 'every department, and my zealous co-operation in all measures, 'whether within the strict routine of departmental etiquette or 'not, which may be taken to recover the health or efficiency of 'her Majesty's troops.

'Upon this I can only say that my zeal and vigilance have

'never slackened, and I am wholly at a loss to conceive to what 'your lordship alludes in speaking of the strict routine of depart- 'mental etiquette. I have never heard the word mentioned, nor 'has any question in allusion to it been brought under my notice.*

'There has always been an officer of the Quartermaster-General's 'staff at Balaclava. For a very considerable time there have been 'two, and these are not to be surpassed in efficiency by any officers 'in the army. Their names are Major Mackenzie and Captain 'Ross.† Lieutenant-Colonel Harding, late aide-de-camp to General 'Pennefather, is the commandant, and capitally does he do his 'duty.'‡

The injury done to the public service by tasking a general engaged with the enemy to defend himself against his own Government.

It is well to read and admire all this lucid, masterful writing; but those who at all know the value of a commander's buoyancy of spirit, and of his time and brain-power in the midst of an anxious campaign, will scarcely help thinking angrily of a Secretary of State who, whilst keeping Lord Raglan in the command of our army, and involved in close strife with the enemy, could also lay upon him a task so hateful,

* Despatch to the Secretary of State, 3d March 1855.

† The well-known excellence of the subordinate officers serving in the Quartermaster-General's Department was not mere good fortune, but on the contrary, resulted from the wise measures taken by General Airey. In *anticipation* of vacancies, he called upon the generals of divisions to send him in the names of officers who might consider themselves qualified for the Quartermaster-General's Department, with specimens of their work in military surveying. He then used to see the officers themselves, in order to judge of their general ability, and besides, caused each of them to furnish him with a sketch and a military report illustrating and describing some particular tract of ground which he selected for the purpose. By these means he learnt *beforehand* who would be the fittest men for the department, and was ready, when a vacancy occurred, to make his recommendation upon thoroughly satisfactory grounds. It was almost always by these recommendations that Lord Raglan governed his choice.—Address of General Airey before the Chelsea Board of Inquiry, p. 55.

‡ Letter marked confidential, March 3, 1855.

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so barren, so depressing as that of having to avert his glance from the enemy, and face round for an encounter of words with the Government of his own sovereign.

Lord Panmure's reception of the despatch of 3d March.

In the third week of March, the despatch reached Whitehall, and was read by Lord Panmure. Owing wholly to his own sheer neglect of the teaching that lay close beside him, he had written in ignorance, and now encountered full knowledge; giving ear to rank calumnies, he had ventured to be an accuser, and brought down on himself flat disproof; but also, to make his plight worse, he had written in the tone that we saw, and now found himself met by high-breeding. If only he had been a man like his peers, he would first have suffered the anguish of finding that, for want of due care, he had done a grievous wrong, and then, with a generous readiness, would have hastened to unsay his rash words, adding largely his expressions of regret for the hapless mistake he had made. What he did, however, was this—

His despatch in reply.

In his replying despatch, he harped anew—not intelligently *—upon the question of the road, returned (though not, this time, with violence) to the subject of the Headquarter Staff, declared that the Government had not been kept well informed about the state of the army,† and also thus wrote :—

* I say 'not intelligently,' because, though informed that the construction of a road had been prevented by want of 'hands,' he continued to 'harp' on the subject without even attempting to show how 'hands' for the work could have been found.

† How amply and completely Lord Raglan kept the Government informed we have seen. See *ante*, p. 330.

'I have never doubted your deep personal anxiety for the 'safety and wellbeing of your army: all that I mean to say is, 'that while asserting your constant and unremitting study, during 'the dreary months of winter, to overcome your difficulties, you 'have never furnished the Government with any details of your 'arrangements, so as to enable them to support you against those 'who taxed you with indifference to, and ignorance of, the real 'condition of your troops. . . . .

'It is with pleasure that I learn your frequent visits to the dif- 'ferent parts of the camp, as it enables me now to contradict the 'oft-repeated assertions to the contrary, on the authority of your 'own word, which I hold to be irrefragable.

'You appear to be much offended with that sentence in my de- 'spatch in which I state that "your Staff seem to have known as '"little as yourself of the condition of your gallant men." You 'say that you do not deserve this reproach. I rejoice to find that 'such is the case; but you never so informed the Duke of New- 'castle or myself before, and how could we know the real facts of 'your case?*

'Assertions, based on the fullest confidence in your good feeling 'and discretion, were the only weapons left us to contend with 'positive, and apparently strongly fortified, averments. Can you 'be surprised that we required something more?

'You ask me for the name of your slanderer. I will only say 'that my information has not been derived from the columns of 'the "Times," but from eyewitnesses of the scenes by which you 'have been surrounded, but whom it would be a base breach of 'confidence in me to betray.

'You seem to forget my position, and consider me as bound 'solely to defend you against all assailants. I have a duty to 'discharge to the army, for which the country holds me strictly 'responsible. If I am told that it starves amidst the means of 'obtaining supplies—that it continues to empty its ranks into its 'hospitals, and finds no medicines by which its diseases can be 'alleviated—I cannot turn a deaf ear to such startling complaints,

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* This is surely a wonderful paragraph to have been written by a Secretary of State. It apparently amounts to this: 'How could we 'help believing you to be a guilty and wicked delinquent when you 'never said you were not?'

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'nor should you take offence when I shall call your attention to 'them, and require that they should be fully explained. . . . .

'And now I hasten to the conclusion of your despatch, in which 'you give expression to the pain, mortification, and surprise at 'the manner in which my predecessor and myself have entertained 'all the abuse which has been so lavishly poured upon you.

'This is not so. It is my firm belief that, had my predecessor 'taken this line—had he exhibited less of magnanimity [in show-'ing *] in personally confronting the storm of popular indignation '—that storm would have rolled more heavily upon you.

'For myself, you need not doubt my readiness to defend you 'amid the trials and difficulties of your arduous career; but I 'must have your confidence—I must know from yourself the dark 'as well as the bright shades of the scenes in which you move—I 'must be enabled to fight your battles even against invisible and 'anonymous foes; and if you arm me with this power, you may 'look for all the support which a minister can give to a general.

'One word more: I trust that this very painful correspondence 'is done. Why, my lord, do you refer to your life of honour—'of which you may be justly proud—and the regard for your truth, 'which was entertained by the greatest man of the age?

'Is there a sentence in my despatch that calls in question either 'the one or the other? If so, I extract † it at once.

'But surely I may be permitted to question your judgment 'without impugning your truth or your honour? both of which, 'be assured, are as precious in my eyes, and in those of your 'countrymen, as they can be in your own.' ‡

Errors marking the despatch.

The part of the despatch above cited based itself on three errors, and each of them was of a very gross kind. The first error consisted in dealing with Lord Raglan's despatch as one that had complained of the Minister for making enquiries, the truth being not merely different but opposite; for what Lord Raglan

* *Sic* in original; but apparently the writer meant to have struck out the two words I have placed within brackets.

† *Sic* in original; but of course the word meant was 'retract.'

‡ Despatch from Lord Panmure, 19th March 1855.

had indignantly complained of was that he and his Staff had been not only accused, but even condemned unheard, and without having first been requested to furnish the due explanations. The second hugely gross error lay in actually assuming that anonymous aspersions upon a general carrying on an anxious campaign and wrestling close with the enemy, should be accepted by a Government as though they were true, unless he turned round and disproved them! It is interesting and important to know that a man with brains clouded by the presence of such an idea, could be not only a Secretary of State, but one charged with the conduct of war. The third error was that of imagining that the words I have cited from Lord Panmure's despatch of the 12th of February were otherwise than coarsely offensive.

What helps to redeem the despatch is the virtual, though ill-fashioned retractation which I think it may be said to contain, and the evident good feeling that breaks out in its concluding sentences.

Eagerness of the Government, including Lord Panmure, to remove the Headquarter Staff.

If the Government scarce acted in earnest when ostensibly attacking their general, there was no want of bitter reality in their determination to expiate the winter calamities by sacrificing to public anger Lord Raglan's Headquarter Staff; and into this chase after 'victims' the new Minister threw himself with unbecoming zeal. Perhaps he, and even Lord Palmerston and some other members of the Cabinet, would have liked to enforce a change of the officers surrounding Lord Raglan by a sheer exertion of power; and it must be added—for men in those days were

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not at all brave against clamour—that the chief's earnestly declared approval of the services rendered him by his Staff at Headquarters was not alone held sufficing to forbid the baneful change. But in the way of this measure there happily stood one grave obstacle. The outcry had singled out the Quartermaster-General as the functionary to be offered in sacrifice, and it so happened that this particular officer was one who could not be spared.

The difficulty that stood in their way.

Irrespectively of the injury that the Quartermaster-General's Department would have suffered from being deprived of its chief, there was a yet graver evil that must needs have been wrought by taking him away from Headquarters. The assistance he was able to give in carrying out the will of Lord Raglan had grown to be beyond measure precious. Lord Raglan, it is true, had an extraordinary capacity for work which his sixty-six years had not perceptibly lessened, but his immense and multifarious tasks were of such a kind that they necessarily kept him long at his desk, and it was of infinite moment that he should be able to multiply himself by the aid of a highly qualified officer in whom he could thoroughly trust. General Airey was the officer needed. In his sound, rapid judgment, his tact, his knowledge of men and of army business, in his high breeding, his power of composing differences, in the clearness and impulsive force which marked his delivery of orders, and withal, in his peculiar, constitutional eagerness for swift, active movement and bodily work, he had the very assemblage of personal gifts best adapted for

General Airey.

enabling a devoted subordinate to execute the will of his chief.

Of course under such conditions, supposing them known to our Government, no Minister would have imagined the outrage, or rather the crime, of wantonly withdrawing from Lord Raglan in the midst of the strife an officer whose aid was thus precious. But in London, as yet, the truth was not largely known. It was known on one side of Whitehall, but not on the other. The Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards was sure, to speak plainly, that General Airey had become Lord Raglan's right-hand man, and could not be taken from him without grievous injury to the public service, but the Secretary of State for War had not yet been brought to a like conclusion. Still, Lord Panmure saw that, unless the belief entertained at the Horse Guards could be decisively negatived, he must not venture to deprive Lord Raglan of General Airey's services; and for the dispersion of all doubt on the subject, he determined to provide himself with such guidance as would be not only safe, but authoritative.

He had become Lord Raglan's 'right-hand man.'

Course taken by Lord Panmure.

With this object, he despatched to the Crimea a general officer of high standing, namely, General James Simpson, who, besides being armed with the authority of a 'Chief of the Staff' at Lord Raglan's Headquarters, was instructed to look into the composition of the general Staff of the army, to report his opinion, and any changes he might think necessary; and he was specially charged to report any unfitness he might observe, without favour or affection.

Appointment of General Simpson.

His instructions.

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After passing many weeks at Lord Raglan's Headquarters, and informing himself with great care upon the questions referred to him, General Simpson reported his opinion of the officers of the Headquarter Staff, saying also: 'There is not one of them whom 'I would wish to see removed;' and adding yet further, 'I do not think a better selection of staff 'officers could be made, and therefore have no 'reasons to recommend any changes to your lord-'ship.*

His report.

General Simpson, we saw, had come out with an authority then new in our army—the authority of a 'chief of the staff;' and if he had been a self-asserting, self-seeking officer, he might have claimed a position like that of the chief of the staff in the French army. But, happily, he was a high-minded, conscientious man, who could not have harboured a thought of selfishly pushing his opportunities to the injury of the public service; and when he had assured himself that the military departments at Headquarters were all working excellently, he no less wisely than honourably forbore from an interference which he saw would do no sort of good, and thus placed his course of action in harmony with the judgment he had formed and recorded.†

His course of action.

* Report, dated Headquarters in the Crimea, 26th April 1855. The general made his report the more satisfactory by saying: 'I confess 'myself to have come amongst these officers, many of them strangers 'to me, with some degree of prejudice against them created in my 'mind by the gross misrepresentations current in England respecting 'them.'

† The zeal, energy, and good sense of General Simpson enabled him

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With this judgment to chasten his errors, our War Minister, as may well be supposed, no longer sought to make changes in Lord Raglan's Headquarter Staff; and indeed before long, he thus frankly wrote to Lord Raglan: 'You shall hear no more from me as to 'your Staff. I have told my colleagues that I 'acquiesce in your reasons for not submitting to a 'change, and that I will press it no further.'*

Lord Panmure's adoption of the report.

His letter on the subject to Lord Raglan.

Thus truth in the end prevailed against angry, railing multitudes with the Government of the Queen at their head; but whoever has read these pages will see that by the firmness of Lord Raglan, with a little —very little—support from public men in England,† our army was saved from the truly formidable danger of having its central staff broken up in the midst of the strife—close hard strife—maintained day and night with the enemy.

The danger thus at length warded off.

VII.

The four 'Peelite' Ministers—namely, Sir James Graham, Mr Gladstone, Mr Sidney Herbert, and Mr

Secession of the four

to render valuable service in the performance of the special and important duties with which Lord Raglan from time to time entrusted him.

* Private letter, 1st June 1855.

† Lord Hardinge—the Commander-in-Chief of the Horse Guards—keenly felt the enormous and perhaps irreparable mischief of taking away from Lord Raglan 'his right-hand man,' and he struggled hard against the intended change. Mr Gladstone, too, had the merit of successfully urging (as indeed common-sense seemed to show quite peremptorily) that no change of the Headquarter Staff ought to take place without the assent of Lord Raglan.

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'Peelite' Ministers.

Cardwell continued to hold office under Lord Palmerston during a period of about fourteen days; but resigning at the end of that time (because they could not join with their colleagues in abandoning further resistance to the nomination of Mr Roebuck's Committee),* they were succeeded by Whigs, of whom Lord John Russell was one. Whilst suffering under this change a huge loss of both administrative and oratorical power, the Government of Lord Palmerston became more homogeneous than at first, and apparently more free from the danger of being disturbed in its task by dissension springing up in the Cabinet.

Their successors.

Effect of the change.

VIII.

The late vote of the Commons.

The order for appointing a Committee to enquire into the conduct of the war was a measure adopted in anger by the House of Commons; and amongst the supporters of the motion, there were many who had rather intended to censure Lord Aberdeen's Government than to have their vote strictly obeyed according to its literal import. Some thought that a Committee sitting charged with the task proposed

* I believe that soon after their acceptance of office, they became pained at the thought of having separated themselves from their old chief, Lord Aberdeen, and the more so because, like him, they were more anxious than Lord Palmerston seemed to be for the restoration of peace. Feelings of this kind contributed perhaps more or less to their resolve; and with Sir James Graham, in particular, that was certainly the case.

would be 'unconstitutional,' and that such a tribunal, erected in the midst of a war, and at a time of great public anger, would be likely to usurp no small share of the executive power; others dreaded the too obvious perils resulting from wholesale disclosures, and were not to be tranquillised by a hopeless suggestion for investing the chosen enquirers with the attributes of a 'Secret' Committee; whilst others again imagined that the inquest perhaps might result in fierce, passionate denunciations and vindictive impeachments, more likely to generate distracting troubles at home than to aid or enlighten our Government in its task of conducting the war.

The apprehended dangers of a Committee.

If the resignation of Lord Aberdeen's Government had definitely banished from office either all or nearly all of its members, the House of Commons — then somewhat appeased — might possibly have accepted their fall as an expiation sufficiently signal to meet the real gist of its vote; and in that case, perhaps, at the instance of a Government substantially new, might have consented to abstain from giving further effect to the order for appointing a Committee; but —disclosing its mind at a time which preceded the secession of the four 'Peelite' members—the House had shown an evident unwillingness to retrace its deliberate step at the bidding of a Government which, with only two exceptions, then comprised in it all the members of Lord Aberdeen's condemned Cabinet; and Lord Palmerston, perceiving this spirit, was content to deprecate gently the threatened enquiry

The House unwilling to rescind its vote.

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without attempting graver resistance.* The House maintained its resolve, and proceeded to appoint a Committee—a Committee of eleven members.

The Committee appointed.

This final resolve of the House seemed likely, as many imagined, to prove a grave, perilous crisis in English history; and, unless men were gifted with a little of that sanguine assurance which for mortals is a part of true wisdom, they might well enough find themselves lapsing into a despondent mood. For now in a trying campaign, and almost indeed one may say, in the midst of a protracted engagement, the Executive hitherto charged with the task of carrying on war, seemed almost put under arrest, and compelled, as it were, to stand prisoner—its 'sword of 'state' laid on the table—before a new, strange tribunal scarce qualified by its popular origin to make a resolute stand against the passions that raged out of doors. Many anxious observers imagined that, though nominally confined to the past, a fierce and widely ranging enquiry would carry with it the means of exercising present control. The whole structure of our Government system, if not indeed visibly reeling from the force of the shock, lay at all events under reproach; because numbers of people of all ranks and conditions, from the mere railers up to great statesmen, were believing that our ancient Polity, as modified by time and circumstance, had failed to provide an executive really competent to business of State.

The import of this measure.

The whole structure of our Government system brought under reproach.

* His determination to take that course caused, as we saw, the secession of the four 'Peelite' members of his Cabinet. See *ante* p. 351.

This was not the mere disposition to go and cast blame on 'the Government' of the hour in a common political sense, but a lowering distrust of the whole fabric of executive administration, men withdrawing, as it were, their allegiance from an ancient State which, they said, was no longer in a condition to be able to do its State work. The Prince Consort might not have the instincts of a man born and bred in the maze of our English anomalies, and seemingly turbulent strife, but at the least he was a careful student of this wayward nation, and he certainly got to believe, nay, even somewhat later declared, that—not merely our administrative system, but—the very Constitution of the realm was undergoing a 'heavy 'trial.'*

In other times, violent outcries kept up by the press through the autumn and half through the winter, have been stayed with a curious suddenness on the reassembly of members of Parliament; † but here, as we have seen, the sheer facts were painfully eloquent, and besides, the House of Commons had been weakened by having its most statesmanlike members placed under arraignment, so that, after making deduction of not only those accused Ministers, but also of those who by stress of party were

The feeling not appeased by the reassembly of Parliament.

* To some, unless I mistake, he spoke much more pointedly, saying that the Constitution was *on its trial.*

† A good instance of this might be found by referring to the opening of Parliament in 1864, and to the week which preceded it. The change in such cases does not generally await the actual opening of Parliament, but takes place a few days before, when members begin to meet, and compare their impressions.

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driven to join in attacking them, the remnant was not one of such kind as to be strong in moderation or wisdom. The Opposition might have exerted great power, and with wholesome effect, but it showed no patriot wish to spare political adversaries for the sake of the mere public good. Its leader in the House of Commons gave way to temptation, and set himself to construct pointed phrases with which to go down and cry havoc.

There was one question—hard of solution—that Parliament might well have debated; for was it truly inevitable—were the Russians indeed so blest—that the duty—the military duty—of determining whether a fact could be safely disclosed to the enemy must remain, as before, entrusted—entrusted without any safeguard—to eager, hurried editors?* But far from engaging their energies in any such task, members gave their whole care to the subject already engrossing the nation, and set themselves to repeat with the lips what they had lately been reading in print.

Violence of the language used in the House of Commons.

Whether honestly enraged, as I myself have believed, or 'cringing' under the press, as Mr Drummond declared, our House of Commons surpassed the journalists in violence and heat. There were even men fresh from the work of carrying on Government business who seemed to think all was chaos. Lord John Russell used words which appeared to confess the incapacity of the Government to which he had be-

* Even now, in 1880, the question is still awaiting solution; see Lord Melgund's interesting and suggestive article in the 'Nineteenth Century' for March 1880.

longed only a few days before; and another eloquent member, then still holding office though not in the Cabinet, came down so perturbed, so despondent, that in addressing the House, he broke all the bonds of his own departmental red-tape, declaring our administrative system to be 'medieval' and 'rotten.' Amongst people not quite in despair, and desiring to be what we call 'practical,' the yearning after some better system expressed itself in the organised agitation that was all at once set on foot for the attainment of 'administrative reform;' and, as in the old times of trouble and danger, the House heard once more of a motion to 'consider the state of 'the country.' But some orators preferred vouching simply that the nation was in an 'abyss;' and a member—a gifted member—stood up in his place, boldly, even avowedly, pressing the example of the French Convention in the days of the Terror, and proposing that the House of Commons should send delegates to the army with power, as he frankly expressed it, 'to 'sacrifice those who were guilty.'

Would the issue of this perilous crisis be swayed for weal or for woe by the qualities of the orator who had moved for the Committee, and was destined to be its chairman? Mr Roebuck had a high public spirit, and the honour of his country was dear to him. He had served many years in the House of Commons, and there held a peculiar station. Placing unbounded confidence in himself, and troubling his mind very little about any one else, he had a hardiness beyond other mortals, a compact and vigorous

Mr Roebuck.

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diction, that was quite good enough, yet not too good for his purpose, and, above all, a matchless delivery which made up—much more than made up—for want of stature and voice; because it made him seem like one filled with a sense of his ineffable power. But he had established a yet surer claim upon the ear of the House of Commons by assigning himself a peculiar function. Though apparently endowed with no faculty for mastering a difficult subject, and wanting also those gifts of the intellect and the imagination which enkindle satire, irony, sarcasm, he nevertheless appointed himself to the office of public accuser, and what is more, clung so fondly to his chosen task as to be rarely engaged in any other. Though always accusing, he still was not what the world means when it points out a man as a slanderer; for he usually adduced no material that could well be called fresh in support of the charges he brought, and based them, if he based them at all, on what men already knew. Like the speakers of the French Convention in the days of the Terror, he concerned himself little enough with proof or argument, but advanced transcendentally to his damning conclusions—that is, as the phrase goes, 'called names.'

By restricting any argument he might use—perhaps one of the sort called 'deductive'—to a quite insignificant space, and confining himself for the most part to naked invective, unladen with statement or reasoning, undiluted by any of the sentences with which others qualify speech, he could bring what he had to say within a very small compass; and the

House—loving mischief, yet also valuing time—used to welcome the rising of an accomplished denouncer who was sure to be vicious and brief—used to listen with delight ever fresh for the samples of perfect delivery with which he would point an arraignment, and savagely lengthen the hiss of some favourite little word, such as 'sham.' He had seemingly neither the power, nor even the wish to persuade; and was not only without a chief, and without a party, but even without a comrade, without a disciple, without a follower of any kind; yet he was not morose; and if the play of his countenance could be trusted—more especially after making a speech—he gloried in his state of isolation, sitting happy, and, like Brahma, absorbed in the contemplation of his own excellence. From the beginning to the end of the brief, entertaining interlude in which he thus now and then acted, he had the ear—the rapt ear—of the House, but still was without any weight in it: and, although he did not see this himself, a main part of the amusement he gave was amusement at his own expense; for he could not exert his power without so disclosing his vanity as to make the exhibition he gave seem partly, if not wholly, comic. CHAP. IX.

In the country at large he was much more gravely regarded; for the light, quiet smile in which the House used to indulge when observing a vain brother's foible was a subtle, impalpable thing that could hardly be seized and borne off to a world out of doors by even the most skilful journalists; and—conveyed without any such gloss in full-printed reports—the

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orator's point-blank attacks, unencumbered by wearisome proofs, unshrouded by the language of satire, went so straight to the understandings of politicians numbered by myriads, as to make him in their eyes a great tribune of the people who alone dared to use plain speech.

Upon the whole, if one looked superficially, there seemed to be room for imagining that the danger of erecting this great State tribunal in the midst of a war was aggravated by the quality of the mover, and that under his chairmanship, more surely than that of any other, the Committee would throw blame of such kind as to carry with it dictation, or perhaps (after sitting awhile) would burst down upon the country at home and upon the army abroad with a hurricane of savage impeachments.

Yet a forecast of the probable effect of his chairmanship might have been made in the very opposite direction, and on better grounds; for, if it be true that 'moderation is strength,'* the extravagance of the accusations he was likely to make would afford a good promise of weakness resulting in collapse; so that possibly the result of his efforts might be no dire explosion at all, but only an opportune opening of the engine's safety-valve. This anticipation was strengthened by casting back a glance upon his career in the House of Commons. There, often in the eyes of new-comers, he had seemed to be a formidable denouncer who might almost break up

* This, as the late Lord Hardinge told me, was a favourite saying of the great Duke of Wellington.

the Constitution by railing at public men at manner of the French Convention; but the wiseh (smiling) remembered that although well accentuated by histrionic skill, his onslaughts had been used to end harmlessly, if not, indeed, with a jeer at the orator who was always accusing, yet always accusing in vain. He was only, they knew, a mock Robespierre, who had no guillotine at command.

Other prominent members of the Committee.

The Committee had been so chosen, that whilst giving a fair representation to extreme opinions, and even including the orator who had urged the despatch of delegates after the manner of the French Convention, it also comprised a good number of wise, sober, painstaking men; and if the chairman was indeed an accuser, predisposed to fix blame upon the servants of the State, there were other members determined to make the tribunal work justly in a patient search after truth. Amongst the foremost of these, there were Lord Seymour, cold, able, painstaking, and the better prepared for this scrutiny, because himself highly gifted with the faculties of a public administrator;* General Peel, always trustworthy for his fairness, for his sterling good sense, and having withal a sagacity not suffered to rust because kept in use on the turf; Mr Ellice, a man not unpractised in the business of an army department, and endowed with a natural shrewdness which he had whetted to extreme keenness by mastering the game of Party; Mr Drummond, a man often soaring into mystic, spiritual realms, and scarce ever indeed such a worldling as to

* Now the Duke of Somerset.

finish a speech without—towards its end losing a part of some wonderful creed, yet ted with a piercing cleverness, with a keen, lively wit, and a nature devoid of fear.

tion the motion to make the Committee a 'secret' one.

The Committee had not sat many days, when Mr Roebuck, its chairman, came down to the House, and (imagining, apparently, that he was upon the track of dire plots and treasons, ranging up to the very side of the throne,*) asked that the Committee should be 'secret,' and ordered to sit with closed doors; but Lord Seymour springing up, opposed the motion as 'foolish,' and at once laughed away the air of mystery with which it had been introduced by saying that the Committee 'had not yet discovered any 'horrible State secret which it was necessary to bury 'in eternal silence.' Mr Roebuck, after further debate, withdrew his motion, and definitively abandoned his project for making the appointed Committee become a secret tribunal.

The labours of the Committee.

The Committee proceeding with its labours gave a happy disappointment to some at least of the prophecies which had ominously darkened its birth. The Committee had been directed to enquire, and enquire it did. It enquired with a vengeance. Except as regards public servants and others who were toiling in distant lands or seas, the Committee seems to have examined almost every one, from the late Prime Minister downwards, who might be judged capable of giving any part of the information that

* This subject is amusingly and conclusively dealt with in the third volume of Sir Theodore Martin's 'Life of the Prince Consort.'

had to be sought.* The Committee asked a few questions, and received, one may say, a much larger than corresponding quantity of answers; because it often occurred that from a witness briefly interrogated in only a few simple words there was elicited a lengthened statement replete with material facts, or a production of State papers bearing closely on the matter in hand.

The statesmen and other personages examined had, apparently, every one of them, an unshrinking personal wish to make their disclosures complete by telling what they knew; and, when any of them, for duty's sake, submitted that the danger of harming the public service by disclosure should be considered, they evidently welcomed the judgment which set them free to speak. For they knew that their deliverance from obloquy or unjust criticism would be likely to fail, if information, surmised to be material, should from any cause be held back; and on the other hand, the Committee, with no less wisdom than boldness, leaned always in the direction of free disclosure. It was too late to imitate the prudence observed in common times. Our whole executive system had so lost moral weight that it no longer drew support from the accustomed presumption in favour of what 'Gov-

* The exception mentioned in the text was a very great one, including, of course, Lord Raglan and all the officers of the army and navy then engaged in the East, and besides, the Commissary-General, Mr Filder, whose testimony could not but be of great importance. Under such conditions it was impossible for the Committee to deal with their subject *completely;* but at least they might make diligent use of the testimony within their reach, and this they did.

...nt' does; and it seemed that every servant of ...e, more especially if concerned in war business, ...ight, any day, have 'to show cause' why he should not be condemned as a fool. To restore the shaken confidence of our people, it was not only necessary to get at the truth, but to get at the truth by a road so open, so broad, so direct, that the public would be able to follow.

With this leaning on all sides towards open disclosure, the examination of the witnesses, whether civil or naval or military, went on in a way with which hardly a fault could be found. They were all of them apparently questioned in becoming terms; and although there were some who gave evidence under very strong bias, no one seems to have marred his evidence by a visible want of candour.

The scrutiny was applied to a vast multiplicity of transactions extending over no little surface of both space and time; and there is ground for just pride when we learn that, so far as concerns the integrity and the honour of our public servants, the fierce, searching light thus unsparingly thrown on their conduct disclosed no one evil spot.

Its report.

When the labour of examining witnesses had at length been brought to a close, the duty of framing a draught-report for the approval of the Committee, devolved on Mr Roebuck the chairman. His draught, however, was rejected by the Committee; and with only a few alterations, the draught proposed by Lord Seymour became their adopted report.*

* The report incorporated some sentences taken (with alterations)

The Committee could not make its report a entirely complete exposition, because there were so branches of the subject which could not well be elucidated without the aid of public servants then on duty in the east of Europe;* and this absence of competent witnesses was besides, as may well be supposed, a cause of some errors. Thus, for instance, the Committee erroneously connected the want of a good communication from Balaclava to camp with the illness of the Quartermaster-General, and intimated an opinion — afterwards proved to be unfounded — that a metalled road might have been constructed by the aid of hired labour, obtained from Constantinople or from England; but upon the whole, and considering the fierce, angry discussions simultaneously going on out of doors, there seems to be good ground for saying that, as moulded by the governing hand of Lord Seymour, the report of this Committee upon the special matters of administration, comprised under near twenty headings, was an admirable exposition of the subjects thus handled, and a long, courageous march towards the truth.†

from Mr Roebuck's rejected draught, and also some taken from Mr Drummond's; but the main body of the adopted report owed its source to Lord Seymour.

* See footnote, *ante*, p. 363.

† By saying this much of the report (which is of great length) I trust I sufficiently dispense myself from the necessity of fully stating its contents. With the exceptions above indicated, the conclusions I have reached are so far in general accord with the completed parts of the report that, if I were to give it in full, or even to give an abstract of it, I should be repeating much of what is contained in former chapters. The finding of the Committee is in its Fifth Report. By 'com-

giving its judgment separately upon all these branches of administrative labour, the Committee went higher up in the chain of causation. It declared that (expecting immediate success and not foreseeing a protracted struggle) the administration which ordered the expedition 'made no provision for 'a winter campaign;' that the expedition 'planned 'and undertaken without sufficient information was 'conducted without sufficient care or forethought;' and finally, that 'this conduct on the part of the 'administration was the first and chief cause of the 'calamities which befell our army.'* The Committee added these words: 'The patience and fortitude 'of the army demand the admiration and gratitude 'of the nation, on whose behalf they have fought, 'bled, and suffered. Their heroic valour and equally 'heroic patience under sufferings and privations have 'given them claims upon their country which will be 'long remembered and gratefully acknowledged.†

'pleted parts of the report,' I mean those on which the Committee could decisively report without the aid of the then absent witnesses.

* This paragraph did not form part of the chairman's rejected draught, but was afterwards proposed by him and adopted upon a division by his casting vote. Lord Seymour voted against it. The Committee on this occasion resisted Lord Seymour's guidance, and in doing so at once went astray. It was not from any administrative oversight, but by the peremptory exigencies of their own strategy that the Allies were prevented from going into 'winter quarters.' Where the Duke of Newcastle erred I have freely shown; but the Committee ought not to have blamed him for omitting to prepare 'winter quarters,' or failing to provide beforehand for so strange a contingency as that of the Allied armies placing themselves in duress upon the top of a barren hill. We, however, saw plainly (see *ante*, p. 121 *et seq.*) that, in matter of forage, the 'administration' between them were answerable for an error of judgment hugely pregnant with mischief.

† This paragraph was based in part upon one proposed by the chair-

'Your Committee will now close their report in a hope that every British army may in future display the great qualities which this noble army has displayed, and that none may hereafter be exposed to such sufferings as are recorded in these pages.'*

Reports concerning the health of the army and care of the sick and wounded.

With respect to the health of our troops, and the care of them when sick and wounded, the State enquiries, directed by Royal and Parliamentary authority, did not fail to bring in vast supplies of both knowledge and enlightening counsel;† whilst, to clear the same subject yet further, a whole treasury of authentic statement and wise disquisition was presented to our War Department at the request of its chief. The papers so acquired were confidentially printed in the Department; and there the volumes remain, affording a complete elucidation of the causes which had brought about failure in this difficult branch of administration, whilst also showing the means by which, in the wars of the future, our country might best hope to compass the truly sacred task of providing for the health of its troops, and tending them in their piteous helplessness when disabled by sickness or wounds.

Papers of great value on the same subjects presented to our War Department.

man. The Committee struck out his vituperative words, and adopted the other parts of his sentence.

* This well-conceived sentence was by the hand which framed the great bulk of the report—that is, the hand of Lord Seymour.

† Large portions of the voluminous reports presented by the 'Sebastopol Committee' dealt with this subject, and besides—though not until April—there came in the report of the Commission which had been enquiring into our army hospital management, followed, after a while, by the report of the 'Sanitary Commissioners.'

say that the volumes thus enlightening and ...ng the State are volumes from the hand of a ...oman, I at once, without more, recall an honoured name.

Proceedings and Report of M'Neill and Tulloch, the Commissariat Commissioners.

In obedience to their instructions, the Commissioners, Sir John M'Neill, and Colonel Tulloch went out to the Crimea;* and after there examining witnesses, they reported upon the management of our Commissariat in terms containing some strictures upon Mr Filder's administration.†

Whilst investigating the cause of delays in the delivery of rations and army stores, they of course perceived that the question connected itself with the state of the road by which our troops on the Chersonese were forced to draw their supplies; and accordingly, upon that last subject they undertook to report. They reported that, from want of hands, it had been impossible to make such a road.‡

Whilst reporting upon subjects connected with Commissariat arrangements, the Commissioners were performing a task distinctly within their compe-

* For their instructions, see *ante*, p. 321, and note. They omitted to take with them a shorthand writer, and the evidence they elicited had to be recorded by 'condensed' minutes, and it need hardly be said that such documents were ill fitted for the purpose of proof.

† These strictures were upon the following subjects: Rations, vegetables, lime-juice, fresh bread, tea, green coffee, rice, fuel, land-transport, and forage,—for more complete particulars of which see the Chelsea Board Report, pp. xx. to xxix.

‡ Report, pp. 18 and 23, and see *ante* the note, pp. 115 and 116, in which the words of their report on this subject are given. In another sentence, the two Commissioners reported that 'the demand for the 'services of the troops in the trenches, and for other military duties, 'was such that they could not be spared for other purposes.'—Rep., p. 33.

tence; but whether from mere inadvertence, or from the difficulty of disentangling connected subjects, or from construing their written instructions with a good deal of freedom, they trespassed beyond what apparently must have been their set bounds, and put into their final* report some little stray 'animadversions' which applied to three general officers—Lord Lucan, Lord Cardigan, and Sir Richard Airey—and to one with the rank of Colonel—that is, Colonel Alexander Gordon.† Their report was laid before Parliament.

By this time a whole year had elapsed since the painful, calamitous weeks of our earlier winter campaign. And of late, too, the war had so languished that the subject of 'the Crimea,' with all its glories and sorrows, might have soon been relaxing its hold upon the hearts and minds of our people, but an 'animadversion' directed against General Airey by two State Commissioners gave the men of the 'Times'

* The Commissioners signed a report at Constantinople which, though purporting to be a completion of their labours, was said by Colonel Tulloch to have been only 'preliminary,' and the 'final' report —signed in London in January 1856—was the one mainly in question.

† The 'animadversions' applying to Lord Lucan, Lord Cardigan, and General Airey, were criticisms upon these subjects: care and shelter for horses, store-issues, tents, hutting, camp and other equipments,—for full account of which see Report of the Chelsea Board, pp. ii. to xv. The 'animadversions' on Colonel Gordon raised disputes with him which were in great measure about words, and need not be here detailed; but they are fully stated and dealt with in the report, pp. xv. to xix. Colonel Tulloch denied that the Report contained any 'animadversions' (Chelsea Rep., p. 53); but did not, apparently, mean that it contained no unfavourable criticisms.

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an enticingly sweet opportunity of reviving against two of its survivors their attacks on the Headquarter Staff; and this the more, since it chanced that General Airey was now high in office at the Horse Guards, thus showing what besiegers would call a 'good front 'for attack;' whilst Colonel Gordon, moreover, in his less exalted position gave a similar, though less conspicuous, vantage to his truly willing assailants.* Treating the stray criticisms of M'Neill and Tulloch as solemn, authoritative condemnations, and regardless of the fact that Lord Raglan's Staff at Headquarters had long ago emerged with high praises from the test of an official enquiry, the great journal inveighed and inveighed against General Airey with a more than ever diligent zeal, throwing also at Colonel Gordon some samples of its powerful writing. Professing, as they did, to be based on the official reports of M'Neill and Tulloch, these onslaughts, of course, gave a hugely augmented weight to what I have called the 'little stray animadversions;' and Lord Lucan and the Commissary-General, taking fire at the strictures which touched them, there were altogether four officers who sought to have opportunities of exposing errors detected in the M'Neill and Tulloch reports.†

Their 'animadversions' used by the 'Times' as a ground for reviving the attacks of the previous year.

Enquiry demanded;

Their demands being granted, a Royal warrant ordained that the 'animadversions' of the two en-

and granted.

* General Airey was Quartermaster-General, and Colonel Gordon Deputy Quartermaster-General.

† Lord Cardigan did not, like the other four officers, demand an enquiry (Chelsea Board Rep., p. vii.), but in the same way as they did, he used the opportunity of defending his conduct.

quiring Commissioners should themselves in their turn undergo the test of enquiry. The tribunal charged with this task was to be a board of seven general officers;* and, to give its decisions full weight, the Government not only ordered that the investigation should be conducted with all the 'so-'lemnity' warranted by 'usage and precedent,' but also wisely insisted that it should proceed under the eye of the public.

Constitution of the Court of Enquiry.

In furtherance of these directions, the great hall at Chelsea was prepared for the occasion, one end of it being appropriated to the Court of Enquiry, whilst the other was furnished with benches for a numerous audience; so that there, the public at large, though railed off by a 'hard and fast' barrier from the military part of the court, could always attend, see, and listen.

Its proceedings in the great hall at Chelsea.

Accordingly, under the presidency of General Sir Alexander Woodford, and supported at the table by the Judge Advocate General, the Board conducted its enquiry in presence of an eager public, unconsciously playing its part as the warrantor of what an Englishman means when he says he insists on 'fair play.' At first, men could gaze with pleased eyes on the fair young wives and fair daughters of

* The Board, as ultimately constituted, was formed by General Sir Alexander Woodford, President, General Earl Beauchamp, General Sir George Berkeley, Lieut.-General Sir John Bell, Lieut.-General Sir Wm. Rowan, Lieut.-General Knollys, and Major-General Peel. The assistance of General Peel could not but be of great value, for he had served upon the Sebastopol Committee, and taken an active part in its labours.

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several officers present,* on the brilliancy of the uniforms, on the demeanour and outward characteristics of the martial tribunal, and besides, on partakers of the last year's campaign with whose names they had long been familiar, from their favourite Admiral Lyons and Lord Cardigan, the leader of the 'Light Cavalry 'Charge,' to that pale, wiry, resolute veteran, the Commissary-General who had come with full purpose to elucidate the vast transactions connected with the supply of our troops; but after a while, if people stayed in the hall, they had to take example from the seven soldier-judges, and undergo the strong wholesome discipline which enforces patience, patience, long patience.†

Penned back in the way we have seen from the privileged end of the hall, the audience included some men who might be trusted to kindle that strife which is said to be always needed for giving a sure ascendant to truth.‡ The great company of the 'Times' was not only present in the persons of its reporters, but also had come represented by one of those gifted writers who were called, as we saw, 'crouching tigers.' This slayer — famed for his brilliancy — sat keenly

* The daughter of one of the generals present on duty was then in the 'reign'—the early 'reign'—of her beauty.

† The practice of putting each question *through* the Judge Advocate, and thus putting it in effect twice over, became after a while so tiresome that civilians could hardly endure so irksome a trial of patience.

‡ I allude to this tenet under the safeguard of an '*ut aiunt;*' but the assertion proclaiming it is at the least an *episcopal* '*on dit.*' 'It is 'only by virtue of the opposition which it has surmounted that any 'truth can stand in the human mind.'—Essay by Dr Temple, the present Bishop of Exeter.

watching the quarry and waiting to make his spring.* CHAP. IX.

And he knew that before many hours his spring could be made; for this martial tribunal was not one so constituted that—like an ancient High Court of Law—it could forbid the public handling of questions still awaiting judicial decision. Day by day, the great journal assailed with keen, studied invectives the officers defending their conduct; but day by day also, the patient soldier-judges went on with their labours, the Judge Advocate repressing his wit, nay, trying to keep down his cleverness in order to practise 'solemnity,' as enjoined by the Minister;† the five officers, one after another, dissecting the 'animadversions' by which they deemed themselves wronged, Colonel Tulloch labouring bravely to defend or excuse his reports, the seven soldier-judges hearing all with manifest care, yet maintaining with rare self-restraint an almost absolute silence.

The five assailed officers were each of them thoroughly masters of the subjects on which they stood challenged; so that evidently what they best could rely on in order to show themselves right was —not any mere art of fence, such as that used in common disputes, but rather—simple, plain exposi-

* 'A serried line of critics, with their gaze
'Intent and fixed, all "eager for the fray;"
'Dealers of thunderbolts which, ready poised,
'Would fall to-morrow.'—VIOLET FANE.

The lines are not in her great poem "Denzil Place," but in the volume called her 'Collected Verses,' p. 35.

† The Right Hon. Charles Pelham Villiers.

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tion: and of one of them, indeed, it was said that he only, as it were, seemed to open a shutter in some long-darkened room, thus allowing rather than forcing the light of truth to break in.

With the vehement support of the 'Times,' and the public applauding his efforts, Colonel Tulloch was for the moment a hero, conspicuous in the country at large. But within the great hall at Chelsea, this very eminence proved seemingly painful to him; for—without the concurrence of even his own colleague—he had taken upon himself to maintain the 'animadversions,' thus becoming substantially a public accuser; and whilst placed all alone at a table set apart for his use, he had to sit in full uniform, encountering, hour by hour, refutation of that cogent sort that comes with the weight of authority—refutation inflicted by men who were, each of them, at home on the ground where their censor was only astray. Of course, under such conditions, he found himself entangled in an unequal conflict; but, though visibly distressed more and more every day that the enquiry proceeded, he fought on with ability and with an excellent courage until the end of one month. Then, unhappily, his health giving way, he was forced to abandon the hall, thus leaving a blank in the Court which no one else chose to supply; for, though pressed to attend in the place of his disabled colleague, Sir John M'Neill was pressed in vain, and he persistently refused to take part in defending the Report he had signed.* Deprived thus of the useful

* Sir John M'Neill, I have heard, used to say that he had signed the

assistance which Colonel Tulloch had rendered, the Board apparently judged that they must conduct the enquiry with, if possible, an increased store of patience, and that, when at last stating their conclusion, they must take good care to support it by a full exposition of reasons sufficing to warrant their judgment.

The Report of the Board on the 'animadversions.'

Having commenced its labours on the 3d of April 1856, the Board brought them to a close on the 4th of the following July, and then at last completed their elaborate Report. They absolved each one of the five assailed officers from the blame expressed or implied in the several 'animadversions,' and gave the grounds of their conclusions with a clearness and fulness of detail which enabled any one of the public to sit in judgment upon the judges, and show, if he could, any fault in either their facts or their reasoning.*

And on the question of the road.

The Board followed, and indeed reinforced the M'Neill and Tulloch Report which had dealt with the question of 'the road.'†

If this solemn tribunal had closed without showing where blame ought to rest, its conclusions, after three months of labour, must have seemed disappointing

London Report unwarily, without having paid sufficient attention to the 'animadversions' which Colonel Tulloch had introduced.

* Report of Chelsea Board, pp. ii. to xxix.

† Same Report, p. xiv. There were thus altogether three tribunals which successively determined that (consistently with perseverance in the military operations) the road could not have been made by our troops; and the two last of those three tribunals determined besides, that the want of 'hands' could not have been supplied by attempting to hire them.

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and lame. But no such miscarriage took place; for by this time, abundant testimony had not only brought the whole controversy into a state ripe for judgment, but had also, as the Board conceived, traced up the main cause of the 'avertible' ills to a great State Department at Westminster.

The now cleared and narrowed state of the controversy respecting the cause of the 'avertible' sufferings.

The 'Sebastopol Committee' had laboured under the immense disadvantage of not being able to examine the generals of our Headquarter Staff, or even the one man whose teaching upon the question of supply was plainly beyond measure important—that is, Mr Filder, the Commissary-General;* but the tribunal sitting at Chelsea encountered no such obstacle. Supplied with the huge mass of testimony which the Sebastopol Committee had elicited, and the admirable elucidations resulting from Lord Seymour's toil, this Chelsea Board drew information from another body of witnesses, and not only had before it the chief surviving officers of Lord Raglan's Headquarter Staff, but also Mr Filder, the Commissary-General;† whilst, to aid them in judging the conduct of his chiefs at Whitehall, they received from the Treasury a highly elaborated paper prepared by the able hand of Sir Charles Trevelyan.‡ Thus, the

* Because at that time the war was still raging, and the General officers in question, as well as Mr Filder, were engaged in the campaign.

† Amongst other witnesses examined by the Board was Admiral Sir Edmund Lyons, and many circumstances combined to make his testimony peculiarly valuable. The closest confidence had subsisted between him and Lord Raglan.

‡ The Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. The Paper, dated 15th April 1856, and filling eight folio pages, grapples closely with Mr Filder's statements.

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materials before the Board were most complete; and by this time, the state of the general controversy as to the cause of the 'avertible' suffering had become so cleared and so narrowed, that by simply determining whether Mr Filder ought or not to bear blame, the Board of General Officers would be virtually adjudging the very question which had long been debated by a baffled and angry nation.

The wide import of a question which in terms only challenged Mr Filder.

Apart from the need that there was for overtasking our troops, the main cause of 'avertible' suffering was traced, as we long ago saw, to a failure of the land-transport power,—a failure not caused by want of horses and mules, but by want of the means of feeding them; and accordingly, when forced to determine how that want of forage occurred, the Board found itself solving a question of extensive significance, and giving the weight of its judgment to the conclusion of disputes which had raged with but little intermission during a period of some eighteen months.

The part of the Report in which the Board showed the cause of the 'avertible' sufferings.

By their Report the Board of General Officers traced the sufferings of the army in the Crimea during the winter of 1854-55 to the want of land-transport, traced the want of land-transport to the insufficient supply of forage, declared that Commissary-General Filder was not justly responsible for that insufficiency, and finally, intimated an opinion that the insufficiency was owing to the omission on the part of the Treasury to send a proper supply of forage from England.*

* Report, pp. xxvi. to xxx. In my condensation of this part of the Report, I have fortunately been able to follow pretty closely the

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With this decision there ended the last of the several State Inquests which had sought to discover the causes of our winter calamities, so that now, after long, dubious searchings in the labyrinth of our military institutions, the finger of blame rested pointing, and pointing judicially, to a great Department of State—that is, to her Majesty's Treasury.*

Acquiescence of the State in this decision.

In this judgment the State acquiesced.†

language of the Treasury.—Treasury Memorandum, p. 4. The Board, after reporting its opinion, did not advise that anything should be 'done thereon,' Rep., p. xxx.; and apparently there was no apt recommendation on the subject of the Commissariat which the General Officers could well make, because they had been in that respect forestalled by the change of the previous year—a change which had *already* withdrawn the direction of the Commissariat from the Treasury, and entrusted it to the War Department. The Board did not go into motives showing *why* the Treasury omitted to comply fully and at once with Mr Filder's demands; but I may here remind the reader that, by aid of the Treasury Memorandum of the 2d of February 1857, I was enabled to carry the inquiry a little higher, and show that the hesitation of the Treasury in complying with the demands for forage was caused by what proved to be a mistaken use of the judgment, but still by an anxious—a too anxious—care for the interests of the public service.—See *ante*, p. 121 *et seq.*

* With respect to the constitution of the Treasury, and the just incidence of blame, see *ante*, p. 122 *et seq.*

† Upon finding that the blame had been judicially laid on the Treasury, the two principal functionaries of the Department—that is, the First Lord, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, then Lord Palmerston, and Sir George Lewis, called upon Sir Charles Trevelyan, as one who was 'cognisant' of the matter in question, to furnish the additional explanations which appeared, as they said, to be demanded by the finding of the Chelsea tribunal; and Sir Charles did not fail to supply the statement required, doing this with great elaboration, and, as may well be supposed, with much ability. This statement of his, dated the 2d of February 1857, occupied 75 folio pages of print, and was laid before Parliament; but no further step in the matter was taken by either the Treasury or any other Department, and, accordingly, the word 'acquiesced' is rightly used in the text. The acts of the Treasury functionaries mentioned in this note were only acts '*inter se*.'

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From the printing of the evidence taken before all the enquiring tribunals there resulted a huge pile of blue-books, reinforced, as we saw, by the volumes presented to our War Department at the request of its chief; and for any who, instead of relying upon authoritative decision, would rather judge for themselves, these vast and authentic materials lie in readiness to show how it was that the undisputed command of the sea, the power of unstinted wealth, and finally, the mighty passport of victory, proved all insufficient to save our army from want during a period of several weeks.

Vast accumulation of authentic materials for forming a judgment as to the cause of the sufferings.

IX.

The long, patient search after truth wrought out just conclusions at last; but we ought to perceive that the spirit which engendered this State litigation was one ill-fitted for war. When our army lay suffering, its wise, heroic silence was ill seconded by our people at home. There, our clamourists proved reckless and loud. By their cries of 'All's lost!' bawled out in the enemy's hearing, they augmented, immensely augmented, the dangers overhanging our army; and meanwhile, by railing and scolding they did what they could, though in vain, to break down the endurance of an intrepid commander, whose calm, as we now must have learnt, was the spell then averting sheer ruin. The clamourists disclosed an impatience of administrative troubles which, if

The part taken by our clamourists at the time of the winter sufferings.

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operating in the days of Sir Arthur Wellesley, would have set a blighting curse on his Talavera campaign, and stopped short the Peninsular War.*

To receive from tradition the outlines of a sound foreign policy, yet to keep it by requisite changes in harmony with a fast-changing world; to maintain in time of peace such preparative armaments as, though capable of rapid expansion, shall not be unduly exhausting, yet always bear just proportion to the exigencies of the adopted policy; to have a real War Department, with all that the title imports; to provide that in future campaigns the lieges shall not be the marplots they were in the days of Lord Raglan; to remember all such duties in peace-time, but at last, when war comes, to seek out the best wielders of power that popular eyes discern, then

* The Talavera campaign was a victory followed at once by a retreat, by the abandonment of Spain, and by the loss, from privation and misery, of huge numbers of our troops, and besides, of horses and mules. Wellesley's transport-power broke down so utterly from want of forage that he had to leave his wounded in the hands of the enemy, and to give away (to the Spaniards) not only a main part of his reserve ammunition, but the guns he had taken from the enemy. During a period of thirty-one days, our troops had only ten full rations, and that 'full ration' consisted mainly of wheat in the grain. The troops in great numbers fell sick, went into hospital, and died from 'want of 'necessary succours.' From dysentery alone there died 5000 men. When our army regained the Portuguese frontier, it was 'almost 'bereft of baggage and ammunition.'—Napier, vol. ii. p. 421 *et seq.* A more complete administrative collapse could hardly be conceived, and yet the man who had personally organised the preparations for that campaign was no other than the English commander. If the 'Times' of that day had been manned as it was in the January and February of 1855, and connected with our Peninsular army by swift and regular means of communication, how triumphantly it would have proved the imbecility of—Sir Arthur Wellesley!

trust, deeply trust them, supporting the rulers at home and the commanders abroad, with a generous, loyal devotion—to do this, to do even all this, will not indeed build up the certainty of triumphantly carrying on war; but perhaps, after all, such a plan may be the best that there is: for what other one can be offered as likely to answer so well?

A free people engaged in war must always, of course, watch with eagerness the progress of its great undertaking; and their instincts may aid the State largely by inspiring its choice of men, whilst, moreover, they can well serve their country by imparting to its Government in private so much of their own ample knowledge as may seem to be needed for use;* but they can hardly do good by burrowing under the offices, whether civil or military, in chase after business details. It is true that for even the highest of those public functionaries who carry on the business of war, there is need of the will and the power to be careful over numberless things which,

* To make the fulfilment of this condition advantageous, the well-ordered War Department presupposed to exist would be one taking care to have ample machinery ready for welcoming, for sorting and weighing the many statements addressed to it. Superimposed upon an Office unprepared for the task, such a toil would of course be intolerably worrying, but might be easily mastered, if entrusted to a sub-department well organised, and well manned for the purpose. Of course, such a sub-department would have to be equipped with a good many waste-paper baskets; but the tone of its Staff should be that of men thinking more of the grain they might find and preserve than of the chaff to be winnowed away. Amongst the many advantages resulting from a sub-department conducted in this spirit, one would be the establishment of a better understanding than now exists between the transactors of public business, and the people at large.

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although at first sight looking trivial, may have closely to do with great issues; but from the complexity and division of labour belonging to modern society, it results that the duties of private citizens in time of war are other than those which attach upon the servants of the State, and can often be better performed by trying to be patient and generous, than by rushing into a state of activity. Whether only the humblest of clerks obeying his definite orders, or a Napoleon imperator in person undertaking to be master of all things, the public servant does well, and may be opening a path to great victories, when—trusting none but himself—he descends into a world of details—when, for instance, he goes and examines the ordained magazines, and sees with his own very eyes to the physical presence of things, such as biscuits or cartridges, such as blankets, or boots, or great-coats; but the private citizens of a nation at war too often confound themselves miserably, and forfeit all breadth of view, if they fasten with critical gaze upon this or that little sample of administrative work. It is with field-glasses, not prying microscopes, that people must watch a campaign.

CHAPTER X.

THE ALLIED ARMIES AFTER MID-WINTER RECOVERING HEALTH AND STRENGTH.

I.

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The French losses much more than compensated by reinforcements.

THE French Government did not prove able to sustain the health of its troops by giving them better food, or otherwise increasing their comfort; and at last, after having had time—long, ample time—for amendment, stood convicted of error, if not of guilty neglect, by the presence of that disease—Scurvy—which we saw bearing witness implacably against the War Department in Paris. But this default did not result in any even momentary weakening of the army besieging Sebastopol; for the havoc inflicted by sickness and wounds was made good, much more than made good, by great reinforcements; and in truth, since the nucleus, counting only at the first 30,000, had afterwards suffered huge losses, the remnant—the small remnant—left of men who had forded the Alma may be said to have become nearly merged in what was a vastly greater, and almost indeed a new army.*

* The rapidity with which troops could be despatched from France or Algeria depended, of course, upon means of sea-transport, and they necessarily arrived by degrees; but in the early stage of the conflict,

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II.

The English:

The English, otherwise circumstanced, had no such easy way out of trouble as that of constantly changing their thousands of invalided men for more and more thousands of troops newly landed in perfect health; and they long had to struggle, as best they could, against the ills they endured from want of numerical strength.

their long-continued want of the hands required for making a road.

The problem of 'making a road' between camp and port long continued to resist all solution, and this, as we saw, because labour in the requisite quantity could neither be got by hiring it, nor wrung from an overtasked army, which—engaged day and night with the enemy, and already doing three times the work that could well be called moderate—was unable to furnish 'hands' for the execution of any such task.

Road made at last by our men from Balaclava to Kadiköi;

and by Bosquet's troops to the Col.

There at length came a time when our people found means to lay down and to 'metal' a bit of road one mile long from Balaclava to Kadiköi; and Bosquet's troops carried it on to the head of the Pass, by the Col:* but the newly split stones—sharply cutting, of course, for some time to the feet of our horses—had scarce been yet worn down to smoothness when already the stride of a railway began to cover the ground.†

General Canrobert was able to state that the aggregate of the reinforcements he expected was no less than 200,000.

* Lord Raglan to Lord Panmure, 3d March 1855. On that day, the French part of the road had reached 'nearly' to the point above indicated.

† Ibid.

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The railway.

The idea of constructing this railway had been long ago seized and propelled by the Duke of Newcastle with admirable vigour, and at one time he thought the design could be executed with singular promptitude.* But so late as the 3d of February 1855, the materials for the railway were only in course of arriving, and it was found that the engineer (Mr Beattie) required for his purpose more labour than our army at that time could furnish. However, by the 20th of March, a part of the railway had been not only constructed, but brought into use;† and during the ten days that followed, the work made great progress, was carried up the hillside to a point not far from the top, and already proved largely serviceable for the carriage of ammunition and stores.‡

The Land-transport Train under M'Murdo.

The formation of a Land-transport Corps to be organised on a military footing was initiated, though not in good time, by the Duke of Newcastle, and completed after long efforts by his successor, Lord Panmure. The corps was entrusted to Colonel M'Murdo, an officer of commanding power and endowed with

* Writing to Lord Raglan on the 2d of December 1854, the Duke said:—'They' [Mr Peto and Mr Betts] 'have in the handsomest manner 'undertaken this important task, with no other condition than that 'they shall reap no pecuniary advantage from it. They will embark 'rails, engines, &c., with 300 skilled workmen, *in a very few days*, in 'steamers, and engage to have the railroad *at work in three weeks* after 'landing at Balaclava. All the assistance they will require from the 'army will be rations, and a few Turks or others to aid in unskilled 'labour.'

† Despatch of that date from Lord Raglan to Secretary of State.

‡ Despatch, 31st March 1855, from Lord Raglan to Secretary of State.

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that kind of energy—so precious in time of war—which grants no rest to obstructors.

As we saw, the great waggon-train organised by the Duke of Wellington at the time of the Peninsular war had been broken up after the peace; and, when England flew to arms against Russia, she was not only without a land-transport corps, but even without adequate knowledge of the huge operations required for enabling a modern army to live and to move. M'Murdo, however, saw plainly that, if England stood challenged to collect great resources upon a small, barren promontory far away from her own happy shores, she yet—upon pain of discomfiture beyond measure signal and humbling—was doomed to be exerting a power not proportioned to the size or the worth of such a mere apple of discord as the port of Sebastopol, but rather to the vastness of her means and the pitiless exigency of her renown. He saw that England must put forth her strength, that to put forth her strength, she must enable her army to move, and that, cost what it might in energy, and cost what it might in treasure, the condition must be fulfilled.* His transactions soon became so extensive that the Treasury—half shrinking—declared they must have a 'limit,' but the Colonel, with what was real prudence as well as high spirit and frankness, rejected this State admonition; for 'limit,' he plainly said, there could not, there

* I suppose it must have been in that direction that the thoughts of the Duke of Wellington were running, when he laid it down that 'England could not have a small war.'

must not be, till our rulers should either make peace, or else provide our army with the needed carrying power.

It was in the March of 1855 that the Land-transport Corps began its operations in the Crimea, but the force at that time was far from having gained the proportions which it afterwards reached. However, M'Murdo's operations for the purchase of beasts had long been going on upon a field so extensive that it included many countries—from Spain in the west to Armenia in the east, from Wallachia on the north to the Persian Gulf on the south; and these dispositions at last brought about the intended results. Before the close of the period embraced by this history, our army had means of land-transport which, if not even then so extensive as to be sufficient for all contingencies, may still be deemed great, because every mule, every waggon-horse had been brought to the Crimea on ship-board from more or less distant lands; and—allowing the glance for a moment to trespass beyond my set bounds—I may say that before the war ended, M'Murdo had under him a body of some 17,000 drivers, of whom 10,000 were British soldiers—men not only competent to their more special tasks, but armed and trained for fighting; whilst of horses, mules, camels, and dromedaries, he had more than 28,000; and that, when the operations of both completing and working the railway had been put upon a military footing and entrusted to his charge, he wielded a land-transport power completely sufficing for the great exigencies of our army in the

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then state of the campaign, with besides means of raising it promptly to the yet greater strength required for any campaign undertaken against the Russian field army.

Our army at last relieved by the French from some portion of its toil.

Our cruelly-overtasked army had long been bitterly needing a little remission of labour; and we saw the kind of resistance which the English commander encountered when pressing the French to relieve his harassed soldiery from a portion of their toil.* In his grievous extremity, Lord Raglan one day declared that, unless he could have his troops relieved from some portion of their toil, he might be forced to withdraw from the front; but the French General answered, 'My Lord, you cannot do that.'† And in narrating this rejoinder of Canrobert's, Lord Raglan adds: 'He was right. I could not do so without 'compromising the Alliance, and in all probability 'the safety of the army.'‡ However, in the second week of January, the pressure applied by Lord Raglan proved strong enough to wring from the French commander a definite promise of relief; and this, ten days later, was carried into effect by putting French troops in charge of the ground on our furthest right.§ The aid, although painfully short of what the English army required, and of what the French could

* *Ante*, chapters vi. and viii.

† 'Mais, milord, vous ne le pouvez pas.'

‡ Lord Raglan to Lord John Russell, Feb. 10, 1855.

§ What Lord Raglan had urged was that the French should relieve our troops in the trenches one night in three, but Canrobert rejecting that proposal, substituted for it the plan of relief above stated.—Lord Raglan to Secretary of State. Secret. Jan. 13 and 23, 1855.

have spared, was still of great service to our people.* It afforded an effective relief to the extent of between 1500 and 1600 men daily; and this, it seems, was equivalent to a succour of 4500 men.†

Supplies of warm clothing.

The vast supplies lost by wreck on the day of the hurricane were in great part replaced, as we saw, by Lord Raglan's prompt, well-conceived measures; and so early as the 3d of December, no small quantities of the blankets and other warm clothing which his orders brought up from Constantinople, had not only been landed, but were already in course of being issued.‡ On the 18th, the quantity received and in course of issue was described by Lord Raglan as 'considerable;'§ and between the first and the last day of that month of December, our troops received and appropriated 17,233 second blankets and 1923 new greatcoats; whilst, moreover, there remained at their disposal—if only they could find means to fetch them—other blankets to the number of 5417, and other greatcoats to the number of 2611.‖ The supplies continued to arrive in vast quantities; and the difficulty there had been in fetch-

* 'The position of our troops is greatly improved by being relieved 'of part of the harassing duties they have had imposed upon them; 'but speaking confidentially, I am of opinion, notwithstanding what 'General Canrobert says, that more might have been done, consider-'ing that the French army consists of from 60,000 to 70,000 men.'—Lord Raglan to Lord John Russell, Feb. 10, 1855.

† That is, upon the supposition that the soldier had every week two nights in bed.—To Secretary of State. Secret. Jan. 23, 1855.

‡ Lord Raglan. Despatch of that date to Secretary of State.

§ Do. Despatch of 18th December.

‖ Quartermaster-General's Address, pp. 154 and 236, and references there given.

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ing them up to camp was overcome, it would seem, altogether so early as the 13th of January, for on that day Lord Raglan proved happily able to write :— 'Great progress is making in disembarking and 'issuing to the troops vast quantities of warm cloth- 'ing of all descriptions; and I believe I may assert 'that every man in this army has received a second 'blanket, a jersey frock, flannel drawers and socks, 'and some kind of winter coat in addition to the 'ordinary great-coat.'*

The endeavour to place our army under huts;

The materials for giving our troops the advantage of wooden shelter were obtained, as we saw, at an early period; † but the weight of the boards, planks, and scantling was so great that, to draw up only so much of them as would form a single hut, there were needed three stripped artillery waggons, with from 8 to 10 horses, or 180 men; ‡ and, until a time long after that when the winter season had passed, our means of land-transport were not sufficient to conquer so heavy a task as that of dragging up timber houses for the bulk of Lord Raglan's army. §

this proved to be for the time a mistaken measure.

Other wants were soon met; and on the 23d of

* Lord Raglan to Secretary of State. Despatch 13th January 1855.

† The Quartermaster-General's measures for collecting these materials began on the 8th of November, and soon resulted in his obtaining from neighbouring countries 46,345 boards and planks, and 11,697 pieces of scantling. The materials sent out from England were additional to these.

‡ Lord Raglan to Secretary of State, 13th January 1855. The materials composing each hut weighed two tons and a half.—Ibid.

§ I might almost have said until *two* winters had passed, for the task of placing our whole army under huts was not completed until the end of January in the year 1856—that is, about fifteen months after the time when the effort began.

January, Lord Raglan was able to write:—'The army is well supplied with warm clothing, and if the Commissariat was adequately provided with transport, and the huts could be at once brought up, there would be no other cause of suffering than the severity of a Crimean winter, and the duties imposed of carrying on a siege in such a climate at this season of the year.'*

Other wants supplied.

These results were obtained by our people without having had the advantage of either a metalled road or a railway, and without having yet received aid from the Land-transport Corps, then only in course of formation.

The now abundant warm clothing and other supplies of all kinds did not quite at once bring any increase of the number of men out of hospital; and indeed till the last week of February, the Sick List, instead of diminishing, was always growing more and more heavy;† but whilst giving the weight it deserved to this dismal indication, Lord Raglan still dwelt, and dwelt hopefully, upon one encouraging sign which he found with his own practised eye. In the look and the bearing of the soldiers on duty he saw what appeared to be a higher condition of health than that which only suffices to keep brave men out of hospital;‡ and by others at about the same time

Symptoms of improvement discerned by Lord Raglan;

and by others.

* To Secretary of State, Jan. 23, 1855.

† From 22d January to 22d February, both inclusive, the numbers in hospital at the end of the successive weeks were 12,405, 13,022, 13,257, 13,594, 13,640.—Adjutant General's Returns.

‡ With his knowledge of the state of the Sick List, he owned himself surprised by this apparent healthfulness of the men on duty.

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a like improvement was marked. 'Are not things 'now at last beginning to look rather better?' said an officer of the Guards to one of his sergeants. 'They are, sir,' answered the sergeant with military briskness and decision; 'the men are beginning to 'swear again!'

III.

The Crimean Army Fund,

When even against the conclusions that seemed to be enforced by our sick lists, there thus began to appear small, doubtful germs of hope, an auspicious arrival took place. The Erminia sailed into port.* She was only a schooner under the flag of the Royal Yacht Squadron—a schooner that belonged to Lord Ellesmere—but she brought nothing less than an Embassy—an Embassy of affection and gratitude from our people at home to the survivors of that valiant army which had borne the privations and hardships of November, December, and January, and was still locked in strife with its foe. The Erminia had on board her both Tower† and Egerton,‡ the two 'Honorary Agents' who had undertaken to administer what went by the name of 'the 'Crimean Army Fund.'§

administered by Tower and Egerton.

What manner of man Tower was we shall pres-

* Feb. 13, 1855.

† Thomas Tower, a younger son of the late Mr. Tower of Weald Hall, Essex.

‡ The Hon. Algernon Egerton, a younger son of Lord Ellesmere's.

§ The object of the Association, which, under the Presidency of

ently learn by seeing him busied in work. Egerton was very young, and now found himself associated with Tower in one of those difficult tasks of army administration which were understood to have baffled the elders; but he answered this appeal to his energies by ripening, as it were, all at once into a strong man of action. It was in a spirit of resolute self-sacrifice that both he and Tower addressed themselves to the thoroughly English task on which they had ventured,—that of doing what in its nature was arduous Government work without Government direction or aid.

They brought stowed in the yacht, and on board two screw steamers that had been chartered for the purpose,* vast quantities of goods supplied by our people at home for the comforting of their troops in the distant Crimea—goods including all manner of things, from the 37,000 flannel shirts and jerseys, to the supply of brushes and combs, from mighty stores of wine, ale, and meat, down to pepper, mus-

Lord Ellesmere, collected and employed this 'Fund,' was to provide what they could of comfort for our suffering troops in the Crimea.

Of the great good done by aid of the '"Time's" Fund'—a fund destined for the comforting of our sick and wounded soldiers—we shall hear in the next chapter. The object of the 'Patriotic Fund' was to provide for the widows and orphans of soldiers who might lose their lives in the war from either sickness or wounds.

* The Sarnia and the Pioneer. The cargoes on board these two steamers, and on board the Erminia (all three of these vessels reached Balaclava within fifteen days of the same time), comprised altogether about 1000 tons; and these were ready for distribution, besides some portions of the 30 tons before sent out on board Mr William Lyon's yacht the Fairy.

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tard, and salt;* but they happily brought with them also a fair comprehension of the nature of the troubles and hindrances with which our army was struggling.

Enlightened by a preparatory mission of enquiry, which had been conducted with great care and sagacity by Mr St Leger Glyn and Mr Jervoise Smith,† the London Committee well knew that, if their Honorary Agents were simply to enter the port of Balaclava, and invite our suffering troops to come down, and take, and appropriate vast cargoes of goods, they would be in danger of rather increasing than assuaging the winter troubles by making an additional call upon scant means of transport, and besides, on the labour of the soldier already overworked—overworked far beyond any limit allowed by the laws of health. Better taught than our Government, they avoided the error of leaning upon any English resources collected in the Crimea for either land-transport or 'hands.' By timely exertions, Mr Brackenbury (the agent of the Association despatched overland for the purpose) gave prompt effect to the counsels of Mr Glyn and Mr Jervoise Smith, so that when the Erminia reached Constantinople, arrangements there made had already prepared the way for purchasing and forwarding to

* An account of the things sent is given in the Report of the Committee.

† They generously placed their services at the disposal of the Association, and went out overland. The counsels of Mr Romaine, the Judge Advocate, had a large share in causing the adoption of that wise plan of action which lay at the foundation of the success ultimately achieved.

Balaclava twenty-four transport animals, with a large supply of provisions for man and beast, and, moreover, for engaging the services of a 'cavash,' an interpreter, twenty 'hamals' or porters, and ten muleteers.*

It is true that even after obtaining the services of all these working men, Tower and Egerton were still without 'hands' enough for the formidable task of landing, carrying, and storing the mountains of goods they had brought; and there was a time when less resolute men might well have despaired; for on all the low ground between Balaclava and the foot of the Chersonese, Nature, busied in her worst Deluge mood, had half undone the decree which uplifted the earth from the waters; and, except where at intervals there showed an islet of rock, or the surfaces of large detached stones, all was one drear expanse of mud; whilst, moreover, it chanced that, to overcome the huge obstacles thus spread out before them, their means had grown less than before; for six of their mules had died on board, and it seems that some of their Turks were at this time fondly attempting to have a will of their own.†

In two of the boats of the yacht, her splendid crew began landing part of her cargo; but the bales and

* To the means of transport thus provided by the Committee, Tower and Egerton, having touched at Malta, added two Maltese carts and sets of harness, which proved to be of great service. They also most thoughtfully—as though foreseeing scurvy—brought from Malta a large quantity of oranges.

† Were at least causing 'various difficulties.'—Rep., p. 29.

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the boxes accumulated on the wharf, and the anxiety of the Honorary Agents became, as they acknowledged, 'distress;' for how, with their limited means, were they ever to carry a thousand tons of goods to Kadiköi, the chosen site of their magazines, somewhat more than a mile from the beach? However, they held to their purpose. They three times had lent them some waggons belonging to the railway constructors, and when they were offered some 'hands,' scarce believed at the time to be serviceable, they not only seized the resource, but at once undertook the rough task of doing all they could to make it answer their purpose.

The resource accrued in this way:—An effort to meet the demand for hired labour in aid of our suffering troops had at one time been made by importing a number of fine, stalwart men, who came, it seems, in reality from the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan; but owing to some odd mistake, if not indeed, as was possible, to the untutored 'simplicity 'of the times,' camp language described them as 'Croats.'* Not knowing, it seems, how to manage these splendid barbarians, our Engineer Staff had failed to make their services valuable, and Lord Raglan placed twenty of them under the orders of the two Honorary Agents who were administering

* The efforts to hire workmen had been made in various quarters; but at a time when our people were looking out more especially for the arrival of some men from Croatia, the importation of Asiatics took place, and the labourers who thus really came received the designation intended for those who had been expected to come. Apparently that was the way in which the misnomer obtained.

the 'Crimean Army Fund.' With these 'hands' added to those they themselves had brought with them, the volunteers, Tower and Egerton, made a vow that they would execute their task without accepting aid from so much as one single 'fatigue-'party' of English troops, and even without drawing one 'ration' of food for either man or beast.

The division of labour adopted by the two Honorary Agents threw, mainly, it seems, upon one of them that part of the duty which aimed at wringing work from the Croats. Tower was not only a man of indomitable activity, and addicted more than other frail mortals to painful, resolute 'forethought,' but moreover was so grandly constituted as to be capable of enthusiastic devotion to a 'cause;' and the 'cause' of our glorious soldiery having fiercely laid hold of him—laid hold of him heart and soul—the torrent of his energies was a force too strong to be withstood, too strong to be even confronted by Asiatic men.* Reducing his 'Croats' to sheer slavery, yet studying with thoughtful kindness their wants, their wishes, their habits, ascertaining and procuring for them the exact kind of food—mainly bread and dried fruit—that best would nourish their strength, and the most beloved sort of tobacco with which to reward a day's toil, he respected all

* In reference to Tower's vast energies, and his inveterate habit of taking thought for the morrow, it was said of him that if he had been a member of the Government at the time of the war, he would have destroyed all repose in Whitehall, and tormented his colleagues to death; but that still at that cost—a cost cheerfully borne by our people—he would have saved the army from want.

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their best feelings—except their love of repose—and proved able to make them get through the whole quantity of labour required.

Soon, beside Kadiköi, on the road between camp and port, there sprang up wooden store-houses, and stacks of bales and chests, and there, too, men observed as they passed that, under some motive force newly reaching Crim-Tartary, there had been generated a seething activity; mules, horses, carts coming in laden, and finding men to unload them; splendid sailors—the men of the Yacht—bringing strength and resource from on board; men entrenching the ground to find shelter for hampers and bales; interpreters lightly bridging the gulf between the Mind of the East and the Mind of the West; strong barbarians carrying loads; and—propeller of all—his great eyes flaming with zeal, his mighty beard, laden or spangled like the bough of a cedar on Lebanon with whatever the skies might send down, whether snow, or sleet, or rain—an eagle-faced, vehement Englishman, commanding, warning, exhorting; swooping down in vast seven-leagued boots through the waters and quagmires upon any one of his Mussulmans who, under cover of piety (when wanting a few moments of rest), stopped kneeling too long at his prayers. If any wayfarer, passing between camp and port, sought to learn what all the stir meant, he might be told perhaps, orientally, by some of the bearers of burthens, that 'the will of Allah—his name be it blest! '—had made them the hard-driven slaves of the 'sacredly-bearded commander, the all-compelling,

'the sleepless, the inexorable Father of boxes—the 'Father of boxes more numerous than even the seed 'of Sheik Ibrahim after ninety and nine genera-'tions;' whilst the answer to any such question, if drawn from an English officer, was likely to be altogether neglectful of the spiritual element, and simply explain in five words that the cause of all the commotion was 'Tom Tower working his Croats.'

Observed by our soldiers when passing on their numberless missions between camp and port, and reported by them to their comrades, the mere sight of this promising turmoil at Kadiköi began to do good. It was England, busy England herself, that at last had planted her foot in the midst of the drear winter soldiering,—not the England officially typified, that swathes her limbs round with Red Tape, still less the mere quarrelsome, critical England, that goes digging and digging for faults as though for diamonds or gold, and thinks to help the poor soldier by teaching him to distrust his commanders, but the larger, the generous England, fondly glowing with the love of her army from head to foot, and come out all the way to share with it the administrative troubles of the winter campaign, to front the same obstacles, to work by its side the same problems, intent on a simple, a homely resolve — the resolve that she must and she will bring something of bodily comfort to her suffering troops.

The vigour, the judgment, the firmness disclosed by both Tower and Egerton proved equal to the singular task which they had not feared to encounter;

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and having adopted and carefully followed a masterly plan of distribution, they at length knew the bliss of seeing their vast, precious stores pass daily, pass smoothly into the hands—the very hands—of the soldier, helping largely to give him comfort and health, and cheering him with the grateful sense of being remembered at home. The success of the enterprise was not only complete, but attained by means so well chosen that the narrative which reports them deserves to be carefully studied in our Public Departments as an indication of what private citizens have once, at least, done in the way of army administration, and of what our State servants, though acting on a larger scale, should hope and strive to make sure of being able to do.* And, there are other departments of the public service in which, perhaps, the same narrative may be usefully taken to heart, for whilst recording a model example of successful administration, it also shows that economy need not be always forgotten when great things have to be done.†

* Report of the Committee with appended thereto the Report of Tower and Egerton, dated August 6, 1855. I propose to have the Report reprinted for the advantage of the public service, or at all events to take care that a copy of it shall be offered to the War-Office.

† For, although the cost of stores, freight insurance, shipping expenses, wharfage, and packing was altogether £19,794, 18s. 7d., and although the goods distributed are believed to have been of the value of about £60,000, the expenses of the Honorary Agency, including the purchase of twenty-four transport animals, and the salaries and wages of their staff, their hired men, their 'cavash,' their interpreter, their twenty Turkish 'hamals' or porters, and their ten muleteers, and including also all the food and forage required for the men and the beasts during a period of several months, was only £1606, 2s. 8d.! There remained an

A main part of the warm clothing brought was not at the moment required, because in that matter the Committee had been happily forestalled by the prompt energy of Lord Raglan and the Home Government; but with this exception, the immensely various articles supplied by the Fund were all, it seems, of such kind—including even 10,000 'books'—as to prove both useful and welcome; whilst in quality—for a heartfelt goodwill was dictating all this bounty—they were 'the best that town or country could produce.' *

Owing mainly, I suppose, to the skill and the energy with which Tower and Egerton worked, but also in part to their tact and good feeling, our army responded to their exertions in a spirit described as one of 'universal goodwill;' and so stedfast was this grateful contentment that it even held good when religious books were distributed amongst our militant clergymen for the use of their combatant 'flocks.' † The thousand tons of gifts alto-

unexpended surplus of more than £7000. From first to last (thanks to Lord Ellesmere's generosity) the Honorary Agents were receiving the priceless aid afforded them by the Erminia yacht, by her crew and her stores; but from the time of their reaching Constantinople on the 8th of February (they had sailed from England on the 3d of January), their administrative expenses began, and did not completely end until late in the month of May. Still, these altogether reached only the small sum above mentioned.

* Rep., pp. 28.

† Aware of the delicacy of their task as distributors of religious books, the Honorary Agents specially record this crowning success, attributing it to the 'harmony and goodwill' they believed to be characterising 'the mutual relations of Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Presbyterian.' —Rep., p. 36.

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gether are believed to have represented a value of about £60,000. Some of these had been bought out of monies supplied by the 'Fund,' but the contributions bestowed in the form of specific gifts proved no less welcome, and oftentimes strangely interesting. There were thousands and thousands of cherishing things meant to arm the poor soldier against cold, that had been worked for him by lady's hands; but even in what commonly went by the name of 'the 'Christmas hampers'—baskets laden with holiday food—there used to appear sure traces of womanly care; and gracious signs such as these were not lost on the kind of men to whom they thus spoke from afar.

The soldier, who almost by this time had lived through the winter, yet still for a while must be fighting against wet and cold, was commonly, if judged by his looks, a man of wrought iron, disclosing his quality well enough by a stately demeanour, but hardly by any traces of uniform. Armoured thickly and clumsily against the rigours of climate, he, of course, in his outer self, was a rough-looking sample of masculine strength; but ennobled by war and self-sacrifice, he perhaps was more equal to exalted resolves than luxurious idlers at home, and more capable too of the sentiment that would make tears well to his eyes, if it chanced that on raising the layer of hay, or straw, or deal-shavings in one of the 'Christmas hampers' he saw a small slip of paper freighted simply—in lady's handwriting—with some word of blessing or kindness for the soldier unknown to whom her present might come; and,

where even no word had been written, he was one who could still find a clue in the delicate, careful enfoldings of many a gift; for, to look on such traces of tender thoughtfulness in that spirit of distant-worship which sways the heart of the exile, was like coming under the spell of some gracious presence in England, like seeing the gentle hands busied in their labour of love, like hearing a silver voice speak.

The moral effect of these offerings upon the mind of the soldier was beyond measure good. It must be acknowledged that in former times, our people at large had not always proved themselves worthy of the treasure they owned in their matchless soldiery;* but during this winter campaign, the comparative rapidity and fulness of the communications between England and the Crimea had allowed a free play of the sympathy uniting our people at home to their suffering army abroad—a sympathy quickened by learning that under trial of heart-rending miseries, too often suffered even to death, the soldier disclosed a proud fortitude corresponding with what foreign observers, when saying how they find him in battle, have called his 'terrible silence.' To this sympathy expression was happily given by the treasures which Tower and Egerton found means to dispense; and their zeal, their devotion, their absolute forgetfulness

* See in Lord Albemarle's interesting Memoirs an account of the vile reception encountered by his regiment upon landing on the English shore some five or six months after the day when they had been fighting at Waterloo. They were hooted as tax-consumers.

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of self excited the admiration, the gratitude of the Commander-in-Chief.* Lord Raglan wrote from the heart, and with a knowledge of the feelings of the army, when to Tower and Egerton he addressed his assurance that they had accomplished 'a noble mis-'sion,' and went on to say: 'I cannot speak in terms 'of sufficient praise of the total disregard of personal 'convenience which you have exhibited in the pro-'secution of the laborious task to which you devoted 'your whole time and attention from the first to the 'last; of the benevolent way in which you distri-'buted what the Crimean Fund have provided for 'the comfort and use of the British army, or the 'earnest desire you have ever manifested to meet the 'wishes of all. Your success in this endeavour fully 'shows how much we all owe you, and how grateful 'we should be to you; and in expressing my warmest 'acknowledgments, I speak the feelings of the many 'thousands who have so largely benefited by your 'exertions.' †

If people ask, as they may, how this miniature sample of army-administration can be imitated on a

* That this feeling on the part of Lord Raglan did not lose its force —except, as one might almost say, with life—there is proof in the next footnote.

† Autograph letter dated 'Before Sebastopol, May 22, 1855,' from Lord Raglan 'To the Honourable Algernon Egerton and Thomas 'Tower, Esq.' The feeling so strongly expressed by Lord Raglan in the above letter did not pass away. Amongst the last writings he ever penned—it was on the 25th of June, and only three days before his death—was a private note on the same subject which he addressed to Tower, then in England. Because connecting itself with the last days of Lord Raglan, a fac-simile of that note will appear in my next, and last volume.

large scale by Government, the answer is one that by many will be thought to suggest a hard task, but still is simple and short:—Have in London a Cabinet, freed from the exigencies of 'personal' sovereignty, that can devise and give effect to its plans with the wisdom, the forethought, the care that ruled in Lord Ellesmere's Committee; and for that other end of the administrative chain where the strife, the close strife, against a world of obstacles may have to be waged, find men with the zeal, the devotion, the sense, the resource, the strong will disclosed by Tower and Egerton.

IV.

Hopeful signs of improvement in the bodily condition of our army became day by day more encouraging, yet continued to receive contradiction from the state of the Sick List until after the 22d of February. On that day, our army had lying disabled by either sickness or wounds no less than 13,640 men; but during the eight weeks which followed, there went on a sustained improvement in the health of our troops, which reduced by more than 5000 the number of men in hospital.* For a while, the improvement was checked by an outbreak of cholera, which, approaching our troops in May, declared itself

After 22d February, decisive improvement in the health of our army.

* Ibid. The exact number in hospital on the 22d of April was 8683. These statements alone would be incomplete, because not showing the numerical strength out of which the invaliding took place, but the ratio of that invaliding 'to force per thousand per annum' will presently follow.

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fully in June; but apart from that grave interruption, and some others (which however proved slight and brief), the advance towards good health went on steadily home down to the close of the war. Computed in proportion to force, the decrease since January 1855 in the number of admissions to hospital became so great during the last month of the occupation of the Crimea in 1856, that it might be indicated without very large error by a ratio of ten to one;* and, if tested by the change taking place in its rate of mortality, the health of our army advanced from a state such as history indicates when recording the 'Great Plague of London,' to one on a level with that enjoyed by our great towns in England.†

Restored health and strength of our army.

So, its numbers slowly augmenting, its toils at last happily lightened, its wants almost all supplied, our army regained health and strength.

* Under the heading of 'Admissions into Hospital (primary) to 'strength per 1000 per annum,' the Returns before me show for January 1855 4176, and for June 1856 only 432, a change not far short of a reduction from 10 to 1.—'Notes' presented to War Department, pp. 320, 321.

† As shown under census of 1851. Under the heading of 'Deaths to 'force per 1000 *per annum*,' the ratio of mortality afflicting our army in January 1855 is represented by the figures 1173.6, whilst the ratio under that heading for June 1856 is represented by the figures 2.4. The ratio under the same heading in each of the last five months of the occupation of the Crimea was, for February, 9.6; for March, 10.6; for April, 8.4; for May, 7.2; and for June, as before shown, 2.4. The rate of mortality in Manchester was 12.4.—Ibid. I have placed the words 'per annum' in italics to prevent readers unversed in statistics from being mystified by what might otherwise look like a statement that out of each thousand there died 1173.

CHAPTER XI.

SEQUEL OF THE DISPOSITIONS MADE BY THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH FOR THE CARE OF THEIR SICK AND WOUNDED.

I.

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The French Hospitals.

We saw how well the Administrators of the French army made provision for their troops when disabled by sickness or wounds, and the subsequent falling off that took place in their hospital management was a change not embraced in the period with which this history deals.

II.

Allusion to the causes of mal-administration in the English Hospitals.

The nature of the task in hand:

What baffled our people when yearning to do all they could for their sick and wounded troops was indeed, as we saw, the very simplest of causes—that is, the sheer non-existence of any sufficient State engine built up in good time for the purpose; and accordingly, the real task in hand was—not so much to reform, but—rather—all at once to create. Yet, if custom were still to hold sway, the Innovator would have to spring up from a row of Ministers watched

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dearth of the needed brain-force in our public servants.

—they fought always across a table—by an opposite row of old play-fellows undertaking to bring down antagonists if they ventured on anything new; or perhaps, from amongst public servants of the sort that are rooted in office—men known for their zeal, their ability, and even, one may say, for their wisdom in special branches of work, but still men more fitted by habit to go on revolving in orbits, than to weigh plans so new and subversive as almost to seem in their eyes like proposals for some new solar system; and we know how, as soon as Lord Raglan had ceased to be present at Scutari, this dearth of creative brain-power showed itself in our Levantine hospitals, for we there saw industrious functionaries working hard at their accustomed tasks, and doggedly omitting to innovate at times when not to be innovating was surrendering, as it were, at discretion to want and misery.

Accession of a new power;

But, happily, after a while, and in gentle, almost humble, disguise which put foes of change off their guard, there acceded to the State a new power.

the aid proffered by Woman;

Almost at one time—it was when they learnt how our troops had fought on the banks of the Alma—the hearts of many women in England, in Scotland, in Ireland, were stirred with a heavenly thought impelling them to offer and say that, if only the State were consenting, they would go out to tend our poor soldiers laid low on their hospital pallets by sickness or wounds; and the honour of welcoming into our public service this new and gracious aid belonged to Mr Sidney Herbert.

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this accepted by Mr Sidney Herbert;

Although chief of what men called the 'War Office,' he was not, in strictness, a Minister on whom the code of Whitehall threw any of the more anxious toils which the name of the Department implied; but a generous nature impelled him to forego the comparative ease of remaining within his strict bounds, and do all he could to aid his overworked colleague the Duke of Newcastle in the task of providing good hospital care for our sick and wounded troops. Knowing, as he could not but do, that, apart from any authority attached to his mere special office, he was one of the most valued members of the Cabinet; and having perhaps, also, learnt from life's happy experience that, along with what he might owe to fortune and birth, his capacity for business of State, his frank, pleasant speech, his bright, winning manners, and even his glad, sunshine looks had a tendency to disarm opposition, he quietly, yet boldly, stepped out beyond his set bounds, and not only became in this hospital business the volunteer delegate of the Duke of Newcastle, but even ventured to act without always asking the overworked Department of War to go through the form of supporting him by orders from the Secretary of State; so that thus, and to the great advantage of the public service, he usurped, as it were, an authority which all who knew what he was doing rejoiced to see him wield. If he could not in strictness command by an official despatch, he at least could impart what he wished in a 'private letter;' and a letter, though ostensibly 'private,' which came from the 'War Office,' under the hand of its chief, was

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scarce likely to encounter resistance from any official personages to whom the writer might send it.

and through him by the State.

Most happily this gifted Minister had formed a strong belief in the advantages our military hospitals would gain by accepting womanly aid; and proceeding to act on this faith, he not only despatched to the East some chosen bands of ladies, and of salaried female attendants accustomed to hospital duties, but also requested that they might have quarters and rations assigned to them; and, moreover, whilst requesting the Principal Medical Officer at Scutari to point out to these new auxiliaries how best they could make themselves useful, Mr Sidney Herbert enjoined him to receive with attention and deference the counsels of the Lady-in-Chief.*

That direction was one of great moment, and well calculated to govern the fate of a newly ventured experiment.

Thus it was, that under the sanction of a Government acceding to the counsels of one of its most alert and sagacious members, there went out angel women from England, resolved to confront that whole world of horror and misery that can be gathered into a military hospital from camp or battle-field; and their plea, when they asked to be trusted with this painful, this heart-rending mission, was simply the natural aptitude of their sex for ministering to those

* For form's sake he worded the direction rather circuitously, but made his wish plain.—Seb. Comm., Second Rep., 11,103 *et seq.* Dr Menzies stated that he received similar instructions from Dr Andrew Smith.—Ibid.

who lie prostrate from sickness or wounds. Using that tender word which likened the helplessness of the down-stricken soldier to the helplessness of infancy, they only said they would 'nurse' him; and accordingly, if regarded with literal strictness, their duty would simply be that of attendants in hospital wards—attendants obeying with strictness the orders of the medical officers.

It was seen that the humble soldiers were likely to be the men most in want of care, and the ladies were instructed to abstain from attending upon any of the officers.*

III.

What the brain of the woman proved able to achieve by its impelling and governing faculties we shall learn when we come to witness the wholesome revolution it worked in our vast Barrack hospital at Scutari; but of the ministering power that a gentle lady can wield, and of the blessings her very step brings when even she ventures no more than to 'nurse'—simply 'nurse'—the poor sufferers, Miss Stanley, with the Sisters that followed her, became a gracious example.† Impelled by a ceaseless desire

Miss Stanley.

* Seb. Comm., Fourth Rep., 19,969.

† Mary Stanley—now no more—a daughter of the late Edward, Bishop of Norwich, and a sister of the Dean of Westminster. Her life has been sketched very briefly and simply—the brevity and simplicity of a powerful writer—by her brother Arthur Stanley, the Dean. Supplement to the 2d edition of his 'Memoirs of Edward and Catharine Stanley.'

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to assuage human sufferings, and gifted with indomitable energies never taught to do battle for self, Miss Stanley had accepted the destiny which—in language half precept, half prophecy—a loving mother foreshowed as the one that her 'Mary' must face;* and devoted herself heart and soul to a life of beneficent toil. Having long and zealously served as the very 'right hand' of her father (whilst Bishop of Norwich) in bringing to bear his large measures for the good of the poor, she soon disclosed great capacity for both organising and transacting executive work, whilst also in her own gentle way she knew how to rule. She was not without the experience that foreign travel affords; and, when a newly-formed band of Sisters and salaried nurses were about to be sent out from home to our hospitals in the Levant, she consented to be placed at their head, and take charge of them during the journey.

This was all that Miss Stanley at first had promised or intended to do; but she found, upon reaching the Bosphorus, that the ladies and salaried nurses brought thither under her guidance would not be received at Scutari (where alone for the business of 'nursing' there was any apt leadership ready), and must therefore, if she were to quit them, be left without any chief. Could she see them in that strait disband, when she knew but too well that their services

* 'My mother used to say to me, "Remember, Mary, your lot in 'life is to sow for others to reap." She was right, and I am contented 'that it should be so.'—Dean Stanley, quoting his sister, *ubi supra*, p. 14.

were bitterly needed for the shiploads and shiploads of stricken soldiery brought down day by day from the seat of war? Under stress of the question thus put by her own exacting conscience, or perhaps by the simpler commandment of her generous heart, she formed the heroic resolve which was destined to govern her life throughout the long dismal period of which she then knew not the end. Instead of returning to England, and leaving on the shores of the Bosphorus her band of Sisters and nurses, she stedfastly remained at their head, and, along with them, entered at once upon what may be soberly called an appalling task—the task of 'nursing' in hospitals not only overcrowded with sufferers, but painfully, grievously wanting in most of the conditions essential to all good hospital management.

The Sisters and salaried nurses who placed themselves under this guidance were in all forty-six; and Miss Stanley, with great spirit and energy, brought the aid of her whole reinforcement—at first to the Naval Hospital newly founded at Therapia under the auspices of our Embassy, and afterwards to another establishment—to that fated hospital at Kullali, in which, as we saw, at one time a fearful mortality raged.

The hospital at Kullali;

Not regarding her mission as one that needs should aim loftily at the reformation of the hospital management, Miss Stanley submitted herself for guidance to the medical officers, saying:—'What do you wish us 'to do?' The officers wisely determined that they would not allow the gentle women to exhaust their

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power of doing good by undertaking those kinds of work that might be as well or better performed by men, and their answer was to this effect:—'The work 'that in surgical cases has been commonly done by 'our dressers will be performed by them, as before, 'under our orders.* What we ask of you is that 'you will see the men take the medicines and the 'nourishment ordered for them, and we know we 'can trust that you will give them all that watchful 'care which alleviates suffering, and tends to restore 'health and strength. When you see us directing 'that stimulants in large quantities are to be admin-'istered to a patient, you will know that his case is 'all but hopeless, and that, if he be saved, he will 'owe his life to the constancy with which you watch 'over him, and keep him supplied with nourishment.'

With ceaseless devotion and energy the instructions were obeyed. What number of lives were saved—saved even in that pest-stricken hospital of Kullali—by a long, gentle watchfulness, when Science almost despaired, no statistics of course can show; and still less can they gauge or record the alleviation of misery effected by care such as this; but apparent to all was the softened demeanour of the soldier when he saw approaching his pallet some tender, gracious lady intent to assuage his suffering, to give him the blessing of hope, to bring him the food he liked, and withal—when she came with the medicine—to rule him like a sick child. Coarse

* At the time, in December, when Miss Stanley's toils began, the 'surgical cases' were chiefly 'cases' of frost-bite.

expressions and oaths deriving from barracks and camps died out in the wards as though exorcised by the sacred spell of her presence, and gave way to murmurs of gratitude. When conversing in this softened mood with the lady appointed to nurse him, the soldier used often to speak as though the worship he owed her and the worship he owed to heaven were blending into one sentiment;* and sometimes indeed he disclosed a wild faith in the ministering angel that strained beyond the grave. 'Oh!' said one to the lady he saw bending over his pallet, 'you 'are taking me on the way to heaven; don't forsake 'me now!'† When a man was under delirium, its magic force almost always transported him to the home of his childhood, and made him indeed a child —a child crying, 'Mother! mother!'‡ Amongst the men generally, notwithstanding their moments of fitful piety, there still glowed a savage desire for the fall of Sebastopol.§ More than once—wafted up from Constantinople—the sound of great guns was believed to announce a victory, and sometimes there came into the wards fresh tidings of combat brought down from our army in front of the long besieged stronghold. When this happened, almost all of the sufferers who had not yet lost their consciousness used to show that, however disabled, they still were

* Upon what seems to me the mystery of the soldier's true nature, see a Note in the Appendix.

† That particular exclamation was one addressed to Miss Anderson. —Dean Stanley quoting the words of Miss Stanley, *ubi supra*, p. 11.

‡ Ibid. P. 11.

§ Ibid. P. 7.

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soldiers, true soldiers. At such times, on many a pallet, the dying man used to raise himself by unwonted effort, and seem to yearn after the strife, as though he would answer once more the appeal of the bugles and drums.*

the one on a new principle at Smyrna.

Amongst our Levantine hospitals, the one formed at Smyrna exhibited the success of a great innovation on which Mr Sidney Herbert had ventured; for the medical officers to whom he entrusted its wards were, all of them, civilians, and, these, aided by a well chosen band of ladies and salaried nurses, made the new institution a model of what can be done for the care of troops sick or wounded.†

So early as the month of January, when the sufferings of our army were at their very worst, the ladies, who till then had all toiled on the shores of the Bosphorus, detached a part of their strength to confront new horrors, new dangers, and extend their

Hospitals in the Crimea.

gracious empire to our hospitals in the Crimea. It does not lie in my power to trace step by step the effect of their presence, nor even to assign the period when their efforts gained what they would recognise

* Ibid. There was a time, as we saw, when in the hospital alluded to—Kullali—the 'dying men' were more than one half.

† There was of course a military commandant with authority over the soldiers, and the fortunate choice of the officers entrusted with this duty, Colonel Powell of the 57th Regiment first, and then Colonel Storks, had much to do with the success of the experiment. Under Colonel Powell, the hospital was brought to a most perfect state, and his successor Colonel—soon to be General—Storks had a 'tact' so fine and unerring that, for what men call 'practical purposes,' it was quite on a level with 'wisdom.' Under him, as under Powell, all went on admirably.

as a completed victory, but it is certain that within a few weeks from the time of their coming, the General Hospital at Balaclava had been brought into an excellent state.*

IV.

But great would be the mistake of any Chronicler fancying that the advantage our country derived from womanly aid was only an accession of nurses; for, if gifted with the power to comfort and soothe, woman also—a still higher gift—can impel, can disturb, can destroy pernicious content; and when she came to the rescue in an hour of gloom and adversity, she brought to her self-imposed task that forethought, that agile brain-power, that organising and governing faculty of which our country had need. The males at that time in England were already giving proofs of a lameness in the use of brain-power which afterwards became more distinct. Owing, possibly, to their habits of industry, applied in fixed, stated directions, they had lost that command of brain-force which kindles 'Initiative,' and with it, of course, the faculty of opportunely resorting to any very new ways of action. They

The priceless reinforcement of brain-power that was brought to the rescue by Woman;

* So good, for instance—and the instance seems a fair test—that a respectable civilian who had many comforting resources within his reach, and in particular a berth on board a well-found yacht, was glad, when seized with illness, to have the advantage of being received into this hospital. I believe that the merit of making this hospital so good belonged in the main to Miss Weare.

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proved slow, strangely slow, to see and to meet the fresh exigencies occasioned by war when approaching, or even by war when present; and, apparently, in the hospital problem, they must have gone on failing and failing indefinitely, if they had not undergone the propulsion of the quicker—the woman's—brain to 'set them going' in time.*

her accession on the 4th of Nov. 1854.

With 10 Roman Catholic nuns, with 8 Protestant 'Sisters,' with 6 nurses from St John's Institution, with 14 nurses chosen from hospitals, and besides with her friend Mrs Bracebridge (who undertook household management), the Lady-in-Chief disembarked on the 4th of November, and took up her quarters at Scutari in that immense 'Barrack 'Hospital' which was destined, as already we know, to have gathered under its roof a fearful assemblage of ills.

The Lady-in-Chief.

If the generous women thus sacrificing themselves were all alike in devotion to their sacred cause, there was one of them—the Lady-in-Chief—who not only came armed with the special experience needed, but also was clearly transcendent in that subtle quality which gives to one human being a power of command over others. Of slender, delicate form, engaging, highly-bred, and in council a rapt careful listener, so long as others were speaking, and strongly, though gently, persuasive whenever speaking herself, the Lady-in-Chief—the Lady Florence,

* Something like actual proof of this avowedly sweeping assertion will be seen hereafter when we speak of the Commission sent out by the Government to enquire into hospital matters.—See *post*, p. 441.

Miss Nightingale—gave her heart to this enterprise in a spirit of absolute devotion; but her sway was not quite of the kind that many in England imagined.

Many held in those days that rigidity, punctilio, dry formalism of the military type had had much to do with the causes of failure in the care of our sick and wounded, and therefore hailed gladly the interposition of a gracious lady whose compassion, whose warmth of heart, would break up, as they fancied, the all-blocking ice of bureaucracy, and supplant it by the smooth, easy flow of a genial, impulsive kindness. But with all the rare attributes that made her gracious presence a blessing at the patient's bedside, this gifted woman, when learning how best to compass the objects of a largely-extended benevolence, had become well-practised, well-versed, in the business of hospital management; and none knew better than she did that, if kind, devoted attention will suffice to comfort one sufferer, or even, perhaps, four or five, it is powerless to benefit those who number by thousands, unless reinforced by method, by organisation, by discipline. She knew that for affording due care to a prostrate soldiery, laid out before her in ranks so appallingly long as to bear being reckoned in miles,* an administrative mechanism, both impelled and controlled by authority, was a condition of absolute need; and, far from

* When the hospital had in it 2400 patients, the rows of beds *ought to have been* two miles and three-quarters long; but so great at that time was the overcrowding that the length must have been much less —perhaps only about two miles.

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being a spurner of rules, she had so deep a sense of their worth as to be seemingly much more in danger of proving too strict than too lax.

She understood the dire exigencies of war: she knew what an army was; and—because distinguishing measures which might be possibly feasible from such as lay out of reach—knew how to approach its commander. Springing up under circumstances of a novel kind, the private correspondence maintained between her and Lord Raglan was a very model of what such writing should be, being marked on each side by clear-sightedness, by ample knowledge of subject, by care—ceaseless care—for the public service.

The sources and growth of her power.

She received an unflinching support from the Minister who, for hospital purposes, was now in substance the Government—that is, Mr Sidney Herbert. Knowing well—for he was on terms of personal friendship with her—how highly she was qualified to judge of hospital management, and believing her to be on this subject the ablest of all the advisers to whom he could go for counsel,* he treasured the words she addressed to him in her letters from Scutari, and, with this enlightening aid, he, before the last day of November, had pierced through the haze surrounding accounts from the Bosphorus.† Thenceforth, the instructions he gave seemed to carry

* He declared this belief before the Sebastopol Committee.—Fourth Rep., 19,881.

† Supposing, as of course one well may, that she gave herself due time for careful observation before addressing detailed statements and counsels to the Minister, the last week in November was the earliest period at which he would be able to form conclusions based on her

the very words needed for putting our hospital administration upon a proper footing.* Whether addressing the military commandant (Lord William Paulet) or the medical or other authorities, he always took care that his wish to secure full attention for what seemed to him the very best guidance within the reach of our people should be clearly apparent;† so that, happily, under his orders there was nothing but distance to prevent official measures at Scutari from being made to harmonise with the will of the Lady-in-Chief.

The exception was one, it is true, that constituted a baneful drawback to the advantage our rulers derived from having now found the right track. For 'distance' caused the interchange of letters between London and Scutari to occupy a great length of time, and an official obstructor at Scutari might maintain his inertness four weeks; whilst first, the needed complaint was travelling westward, and then

testimony; but *then* plainly (he wrote wisely and cogently on the 29th) he already had gained from her letters a very good insight. It is difficult to help thinking of what might have been done if the Government, instead of appointing a Commission of *enquiry* on the 23d of October, had then delegated Mr Sidney Herbert to go out for a month to the Bosphorus and there *dictate* immediate *action*.

* I cannot help believing that a perusal of Mr Sidney Herbert's evidence (Fourth Rep., pp. 161 to 198), and of the letters he produced would elicit a general concurrence in the opinion above ventured. A delightful candour and good feeling runs through all his statements to the Committee, and he made them so naturally, and so thoroughly in his own way, that to read them is like hearing him speak.

† Thus writing to Lord William Paulet, he describes her counsels as 'excellent suggestions,' and adds—'You will find her most valu-'able.'—Seb. Comm., Fourth Rep., p. 343. His similar intimations to other officials appear in the body of his evidence.—*Vide ante.*

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the wholesome words of propulsion, obtained at last from London, were coming out to the East.* But apparently the officials at Scutari were not on the whole slow to learn that—under some dispensation at that time dimly apparent—'the Lady in charge of 'the nurses' had laid her firm hand on a lever which, against all objectors, and even against sheer inertness, was enforcing good hospital management.

And not by the Government only was she now sustained. Her devotion to an enterprise so painful, so arduous as that of going out to the rescue of our sick and wounded troops had ensured her, as may well be supposed, the enthusiastic applause of her countrymen; and their favour—expressed with great power by the dominant journal—became a part of her strength; for such of the men in authority as were of a time-serving nature, made haste to obey the new power supported by opinion at home; whilst others, more free from worldliness, and wise enough to be docile, came easily under the sway of her natural ascendant. If Burgoyne, when he passed through the Bosphorus, received and harboured impressions unfavourable to her manner of ruling at Scutari, this was only, as I gather, because he had no conversation with her, and did not fall under the spell.† With another of our veterans it fared otherwise. The most unbending

* If a letter were answered *instantly*, the interchange might be a little less than four weeks; but practically, as Mr Sidney Herbert stated—'a month' was about the time occupied.—Sel. Comm., Fourth Rep., 19,848. Communication by electric telegraph covered only at that time a part of the distance, and was not, I believe, resorted to except for somewhat brief messages.

† From the contents of his letter on the subject, one gathers that he

opponent of innovations was Sir George Brown. For him of all men—for him to have to acknowledge that the masculine rulers, between them, had contrived to make utter default in one of the branches of military administration, and that, failing their competence, a woman, proving abler than all of them, was hailed as the welcome dictatress—this, many who knew Sir George Brown would have judged to be more than he could bear; but the dictatress spoke, and he listened, becoming at once a believer—an even enthusiastic believer—in the worth—the unspeakable worth—of what she had already achieved; nay, going the length of declaring—and this before the end of December—that something little short of perfection had even then been attained in the hospital under her sway.

It used even to be said in those days, that the soundness of judgment disclosed by the Lady-in-Chief upon questions needing rapid decision, and the apt, ready knowledge with which she always seemed armed, might be traced to the power she had over men in authority; the theory being, it seems, that—because they felt her ascendant,—these officials were

had not conversed with her, and probably had not even seen her. It was in company with another lady, and with an officer whom also he names, that Burgoyne visited the hospital.—Letter of 27th March 1855, quoted, *post*, foot-note, p. 430.

* In the letter speaking of this conviction on the part of Sir George Brown, and of the admiration with which Sir George regarded the exertions of the Lady-in-Chief, Lord Raglan adds:—'Lord William' [Paulet], 'like Brown, speaks loudly in praise of Miss Nightingale;' and Lord Raglan expresses his own concurrence in these judgments, declaring the certainty he felt that she had 'done great good.'—Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 1st January 1855.

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always longing to give her the very choicest and best of their facts and ideas. But a simpler explanation of the abundant mental resources at which people wondered might be found in the keen discrimination enabling her to judge at the instant whether any of the words addressed to her should be treasured, or set at nought; and—simpler still—in the fact that, from her early years, a stedfast, impassioned benevolence had impelled her to devote great powers of mind and unconquerable energies to the object of becoming well-practised in the conduct of hospital business. However originating, the gift, without which she could never have achieved what she did, was her faculty of conquering dominion over the minds of men; and this, after all, was the force which lifted her from out of the ranks of those who are only 'able' to the height reached by those who are 'great.' One who would not, I know, be prone to misuse our most choice words of praise, has ascribed to the Lady-in-Chief nothing less than 'com-'manding genius.'*

Whilst she thus had great weight with the men in authority, her ascendant held good with the orderlies and all other soldiers whose energies, whose patience, whose loyal devotion, she often had to task hard. 'During all that dreadful period,' no one of them failed her in obedience, in ready attention, in thoughtful, considerate delicacy. For her sake, they toiled and endured beyond the measure of all that official

* Dean Stanley, *ubi ante*, p. 5.

words of command could well have sought to exact; yet 'never,' she gratefully wrote, 'came from any of 'them one word nor one look which a gentleman 'would not have used; and while paying this humble 'tribute to humble courtesy, the tears come into my 'eyes as I think how, amidst scenes of . . . loath-'some disease and death, there rose above it all the 'innate dignity, gentleness, and chivalry of the men '(for never, surely, was chivalry so strikingly exemp-'lified), shining in the midst of what must be con-'sidered as the lowest sinks of human misery, and 'preventing instinctively the use of one expression 'which could distress a gentlewoman.'

But if those touching words truly rendered the bearing of the hospital orderlies and of the convalescents and other soldiers who were strong enough to be able to obey her, there was worship almost in the gratitude of the prostrate sufferer, who saw her glide into his ward, and at last approach his bedside. The magic of her power over men used often to be felt in the room—the dreaded, the blood-stained room—where 'operations' took place. There, perhaps the maimed soldier, if not yet resigned to his fate, might at first be craving death rather than meet the knife of the surgeon; but, when such a one looked and saw that the honoured Lady-in-Chief was patiently standing beside him, and—with lips closely set and hands folded—decreeing herself to go through the pain of witnessing pain, he used to fall into the mood for obeying her silent command, and—finding strange

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support in her presence—bring himself to submit and endure.*

The growth of her dominion was rapid, was natural, and not unlike the development of what men call 'responsible government.' One of others accepting a task ostensibly subordinate and humble, she yet could not, if she would, divest herself of the authority that belonged to her as a gentlewoman—as a gentlewoman abounding in all the natural gifts, and all the peculiar knowledge required for hospital management. Charged to be in the wards, to smooth the sufferer's pillow, to give him his food and his medicine as ordered by the medical officers, she could not but speak with cogency of the state of the air which she herself had to breathe; she could not be bidden to acquiesce, if the beds she approached were impure; she could scarcely be held to silence, if the diet she had been told to administer were not forthcoming; and, whatever her orders, she could hardly be expected to give a sufferer food which she perceived to be bad or unfit. If the males did not quite understand the peculiar contrivances fitted for the preparation of hospital diet, might she not, perhaps, disclose her own knowledge, and show them what to

* That the devotion and gratitude of the soldier and his high tone of feeling did not cease when he came out of hospital, I offer this proof —proof only, some may say, of the negative sort, but not, I think, without weight:—Whoever in this country tastes of even a little celebrity, discovers that one of its incidents is an afflux of those petitions for gifts of money or loans which are commonly called 'begging letters.' At the time I am speaking of, the vast fame of the Lady-in-Chief had brought upon her an enormous number of such 'begging letters,' but —I say it with delight—*there had never come one from a soldier.*

do? Or, if they could not be taught, or imagined that they had not the power to do what was needed, might not she herself compass her object by using the resources which she had at command? Might not she herself found and organise the requisite kitchens, when she knew that the difference between fit and unfit food was one of life and death to the soldier?* And again, if she chose, might she not expend her own resources in striving against the foul poisons that surrounded our prostrate soldiery?† Rather, far, than that even one man should suffer from those cruel wants which she generously chose to supply, it was well that the State should be humbled, and submit to the taunt which accused it of taking alms from her hand.

If we learnt that the cause of the evils afflicting our Levantine hospitals was a want of impelling and of governing power, we now see how the want was supplied. In the absence of all constituted authority proving equal to the emergency, there was need—dire need—of a firm, well-intentioned usurper; but amongst the males acting at Scutari, there was no one with that resolute will, overstriding law, habit, and custom, which the cruel occasion required: for even Dr M'Gregor, whose zeal and abilities were admirable, omitted to lay hold, dictatorially, of that commanding authority which—because his chief could

* The kitchens she established were exclusively for the preparation of what in hospital language is called 'extra diet.'

† She established a laundry for the hospital. Until she interposed, the 'authorities'—males—had only succeeded in washing *seven* shirts.

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not wield it—had fallen into abeyance. The will of the males was always to go on performing their accustomed duties industriously, steadily, faithfully, each labouring to the utmost, and, if need be, even to death (as too often, indeed, was the case), in that groove-going 'state of life to which it had pleased God to 'call him.' The will of the woman, whilst stronger, flew also more straight to the end; for what she almost fiercely sought was—not to make good mere equations between official codes of duty and official acts of obedience, but—overcoming all obstacles, to succour, to save our prostrate soldiery, and turn into a well-ordered hospital the hell—the appalling hell—of the vast Barrack wards and corridors. Nature seemed, as it were, to ordain that in such a conjuncture, the all-essential power which our cramped, over-disciplined males had chosen to leave unexerted should pass to one who would seize it, should pass to one who could wield it—should pass to the Lady-in-Chief.

To have power was an essential condition of success in her sacred cause; and of power accordingly she knew and felt the worth, rightly judging that in all sorts of matters within what she deemed its true range, her word must be law. Like other dictators, she had cast upon her one duty which no one can hope to perform without exciting cavil. For the sake of the cause, she had to maintain her dictatorship, and (on pain of seeing her efforts defeated by anarchical action) to check the growth of authority —of authority in even small matters—if not derived from herself. She was apparently careful in this

direction; and, though outwardly calm when provoked, could give strong effect to her anger. On the other hand, when seeing merit in the labours of others, she was ready with generous praise.* It was hardly in the nature of things that her sway should excite no jealousies, or that always, hand in hand with the energy which made her great enterprise possible, there should be the cold, accurate justice at which the slower sex aims; but she reigned —painful, heart-rending empire!—in a spirit of thorough devotion to the objects of her care, and, upon the whole, with excellent wisdom.

To all the other sources of power which we have seen her commanding, she added one of a kind less dependent upon her personal qualities. Knowing thoroughly the wants of a hospital, and foreseeing, apparently, that the State might fail to meet them, she had taken care to provide herself with vast quantities of hospital stores, and by drawing upon these to make good the shortcoming of any hampered or lazy official, she not only furnished our soldiery with the things they were needing, but administered to the defaulting administrator a telling, though silent rebuke; and it would seem that under this discipline the groove-going men winced in agony, for they uttered touching complaints, declaring that the Lady-in-Chief did not choose to give them time

* Thus, for instance, she wrote:—'I cannot mention' [the name of Dr Macgregor] 'without expressing my sense of the obligations which 'this' [the Barrack] 'Hospital is under to him as being virtually its 'founder, and still supporting it with unabated zeal, vigour, and assid-'uity.'—To Lord Raglan, 29th December 1854.

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(it was always time the males wanted), and that the moment a want declared itself, she made haste to supply it herself.*

The aid she received from Mr Macdonald and the 'Times' Fund.

And the power in this way resulting to the Lady-in-Chief soon received an accession. At the instance of Sir Robert Peel many readers of the 'Times' in those days had not only joined in offering a large sum of money for the comforting of our sick and wounded soldiers, but had persuaded the Directory of the great journal to receive and distribute the fund. For the performance of this last task the Directory chose Mr Macdonald, a man loyally devoted to his duty, and endowed with the vigour, the firmness, the good sense that were imperatively required

* This charge was so utterly without foundation as to be the opposite of the truth. The Lady-in-Chief used neither to issue her stores, nor allow any others to do so, until the want of them had been evidenced by a duly signed requisition. Proof of this is complete, and has been furnished even by adversaries of the Lady-in-Chief. In eye-witnessing statements laid before me, the exceeding strictness with which she forbade the issues until duly signed requisitions had been produced was not only asserted, but made a subject of strong animadversion against her. Sir John Burgoyne, when at Constantinople in the spring of 1855, became from some cause the recipient of statements adverse to the Lady-in-Chief (private letter to Lord Raglan, 27th March 1855); and it is upon his testimony that I rely for the fact of complaints such as those above mentioned having really, though baseless, been uttered. What Sir John Burgoyne writes is this:—'If anything is wanted for 'the sick, she will *hurry*' [the italics are Sir John's] 'to provide it from 'her own funds and stock *for fear*' [Sir John's italics again] 'it might 'be obtained in the regular course.'—Ibid. It is almost fortunate that a charge which, as we see, is refuted so conclusively, should have been made or rather mentioned by Burgoyne in the very plain terms above stated. I don't for a moment imagine that Burgoyne wrote from any ill will originating in his own prepossessions, but simply because chance had thrown him amongst cavillers—amongst cavillers who, as we see, did not know enough of the facts to be able to cavil effectively.

for this novel sort of undertaking. Before leaving England Mr Macdonald saw the Duke of Newcastle and Dr Andrew Smith (the Inspector-General), and by both of them was told that—because of the ample measures already taken by Government—a fund of the kind entrusted to him was not likely to be of any use in the relief of the sick and wounded.* Upon reaching the Bosphorus, he heard language to the same effect from almost all the official people with whom he consulted; and a less sagacious man might have come back to England reporting that the benevolent mission was vain, because forestalled by the measures of a Government now fully alive to its duties and knowing how to perform them.

There, however, took place one frank confession of want made known by an officer on duty, and it brought about an occurrence which became beyond measure conspicuous from the light—the painful light—that it threw on the competency of our army administration. A regiment—the 39th—on its way from Gibraltar to the seat of war had reached the Bosphorus, and was going on to meet the rigours of a winter in the Crimea without having been supplied with any addition to the light clothing appropriately worn in hot countries; and the surgeon of the regiment appealed to Mr Macdonald for that direly needed supply, which ought of course to have come from our army administrators.† Mr Macdonald went

* Seb. Comm., Rep. 6010, 6011.

† The appeal at first seemed embarrassing, because it asked succour for men then in health, and 'the "Times" fund' was one provided for troops lying 'sick and wounded;' but, the surgeon showing that men

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into the markets of Constantinople, there bought the goods that were wanted, and supplied every man of the regiment with a suit of flannels or other woollens, thus equipping our troops with the means of resisting mortal cold by the aid of what was called the '"Times" Fund.'

Involving as it did a disclosure of gross, staring neglect, the appeal of the surgeon of the 39th proved only of course too well fitted to offend official rulers: since, to ask or receive for our troops the assistance of Mr Macdonald was to seal the condemnation of those who in matters closely concerning the health and life of our soldiers should have thoroughly excluded all room for the action of private benevolence. Under such conditions, perhaps, it was hardly to be expected that the audacious candour of the surgeon of the 39th would readily find any imitators amongst men in the public service; and, instead of waiting to be asked for his aid, Mr Macdonald had to offer it. 'Here I am,' he said in effect, 'here I am with large 'means in my hands for adding, so far as is pos-'sible, to the comfort and wellbeing of our sick and 'wounded soldiery; and although, it is true, my re-'sources are almost entirely in money, I have the mar-'kets of this great city at my command; so, if only 'you will tell me of any wants now felt in the hos-'pitals, I will do my best to meet them at once by

without proper clothing, when all at once subjected to the severities of winter, would be sure to fall ill, and that 'prevention was better 'than cure,' Macdonald, with good sense and high spirit, consented to strain his authority.

'going, as it were, across the street, and buying what 'you require.' CHAP. XI.

Public servants however, apparently were reluctant to cast a slur on the service by confessing the existence of wants which administrators ought to have met. When Mr Macdonald asked Dr Menzies, the chief of the Scutari hospitals, whether anything were wanted, the answer he received was precise. It informed him that 'nothing was wanted.'* Upon making a like enquiry in another and more august quarter, he was not only met by a positive unflinching disclaimer of any occasion for help required by our soldiers or sailors, but even received a suggestion pointing out how the fund thus pronounced to be wholly unneeded for any hospital purpose, might perhaps, after all, be applied. His adviser serenely observed that, to disembarrass his hands of a fund not required for its purpose, and also meet a real want long said to have made itself felt, he might spend the money in building. Name of Wonder! in building what? Well, in building an appropriate temple for 'Church of England worship at 'Pera!'

Yet at that very time wants so dire as to include want of hospital furniture and of shirts for the patients, and of the commonest means for maintaining cleanliness, were afflicting our stricken soldiery in the hospitals.

However, from the Lady-in-Chief Mr Macdonald soon learnt the truth, and the course he then took

* Seb. Comm. Rep., 7002, 7003, 7004.

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was one of the simplest kind, but it worked a mighty change. He bought the things needed, and the authorities succumbing at last to this excruciating form of demonstration had to witness the supplying of wants which before they had refused to confess. So now, besides using the stores which she had at her own command, the Lady-in-Chief could impart wants felt in our hospitals to Mr Macdonald with the certainty that he would hasten to meet them by applying what was called the '"Times" Fund' in purchasing the articles needed.

It was thus that under the sway of motives superbly exalted, a great Lady came to the rescue of our prostrate soldiery, made good the default of the State, won the gratitude, the rapt admiration of an enthusiastic people, and earned for the name she bears a pure, a lasting renown.

She even did more. By the very power of her fame, but also, I believe, by the wisdom and the authority of her counsels, she founded, if so one may speak, a gracious dynasty that still reigns supreme in the wards where sufferers lie, and even brings solace, brings guidance, brings hope into those dens of misery that, until the blessing has reached them, seem only to harbour despair. When into the midst of such scenes the young high-bred lady now glides, she wears that same sacred armour — the gentle attire of the servitress — which seemed 'heavenly' in the eyes of our soldiers at the time of the war, and finds strength to meet her dire task, because she knows by tradition what the First of the dynasty

proved able to confront and to vanquish in the wards of the Great Barrack Hospital.*

The default we have now seen made good by the Lady-in-Chief was one, as we know, that resulted from what must be called State improvidence. Shame fell—not on this or that Government, but —rather on our mixed English polity, then convicted of failing — long failing — to provide due hospital succour for disabled troops, and only ceasing to fail when reinforced by the sex which had always before been shut out from the province of executive government.

The untiring zeal of our medical officers.

If the medical officers shrank from usurping the needed authority, they toiled with the most admirable zeal at the bedsides of the patients, doing this in too many instances at the sacrifice of life or health; and if History could search out true merit amongst men unambitiously acting in the performance of special, fixed duties, she would nowhere find it more genuine than in those devoted servants of a fitful, negligent State. It was not on any power

* To the kindness of Mrs Craven (*née* Florence Lees) and the Sisterhood of 'the Home,' where her sway is still lovingly remembered, nay, still, I think, lovingly felt, I owe my means of alluding to what I have called 'the gracious dynasty.' Mrs Craven (who herself was in some sort the pupil—the gifted, the radiant pupil—of the Lady-in-Chief) once told me that the ladies of the Sisterhood are 'the most hard-worked 'women in London;' yet in the few hours of holiday that—only now and then—they allow themselves, they show none of the weariness that sometimes follows the industry of toiling after amusement. 'Reaction, 'after great strain on the powers of self-sacrifice and endurance that 'they have to exert,' may be thought to account in some part for the happy result; but, whatever the cause, their society has in it all that can best and most surely attract—grace, freshness, and natural 'charm.'

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they were really exerting that the Lady-in-Chief encroached; and indeed, far from hampering them in the performance of their duties, she augmented—immensely augmented—their means of effective action by doing all she could to take care that their orders should never be baffled by want of the needed supplies. Requisitions, Remonstrances, Notes, Memoranda, Minutes, Letters, Despatches, all these hackneyed forms of appeal might prove vain one after the other when the Medical Officer tried them; but, if only he could cause the obstructors to fear that perhaps he would bring down upon them the anger of the Lady-in-Chief, he might hope to produce an effect like what, in old times at Whitehall, men used to expect from the magic of 'going to Mr Pitt.'*

Their power to heal and to cure greatly strengthened by the authority of the Lady-in-Chief.

In the hearts of thousands and thousands of our people there was a yearning to be able to share the toil, the distress, the danger of battling for our sick and wounded troops against the sea of miseries that encompassed them on their hospital pallets: and men still remember how graciously, how simply, how naturally, if so one may speak, the Ambassadress Lady Stratford de Redcliffe and her beauteous guest† gave their energies and their time to the work; still remember the generous exertions of Mr Sidney Osborne and Mr Joscelyne Percy; still remember, too, how Mr Stafford—I would rather call him 'Stafford 'O'Brien'—the cherished, yet unspoilt favourite of English society, devoted himself heart and soul to

* Alluded to in footnote *ante*, p. 43.

† Agnes, the first Lady George Paget, now no more.

the task of helping and comforting our prostrate soldiery in the most frightful depths of their misery.

Many found themselves embarrassed when trying to choose the best direction they could for their generous impulses; and not, I think, the least praiseworthy of all the self-sacrificing enterprises which imagination devised was that of the enthusiastic young fellow who, abandoning his life of ease, pleasure, and luxury, went out, as he probably phrased it, to 'fag' for the Lady-in-Chief. Whether fetching and carrying for her, or writing for her letters or orders, or orally conveying her wishes to public servants or others, he, for months and months, faithfully toiled, obeying in all things her word. There was grace—grace almost medieval—in his simple, yet romantic idea; and, if humbly, still not the less usefully, he aided the sacred cause, for it was one largely, mainly, dependent on the power of the lady he served; so that, when by obeying her orders he augmented her means of action, and saved her precious time, there were unnumbered sufferers deriving sure benefit from his opportune, well-applied help. By no other kind of toil, however ambitiously aimed, could he well have achieved so much good.

On the 23d of November, Lord Raglan replaced Major Sillery, by sending Lord William Paulet to take charge of affairs on the Bosphorus;* and in reference to this wholesome change, the Sebastopol Committee reported that there took place a gradual

* Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, 23d November 1854.

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improvement in the state of the hospitals from the time when Lord William assumed his command;* but the Committee went astray, if they meant that that date marked the beginning—the very beginning and origin—of decisive improvement; for before the early days of December (when the wisely exerted authority of the new commandant began to tell with advantage), that accession of impelling and governing faculties which our hospital system received on the 4th of November† had already been followed by progress—by progress towards good administration maintained against all the obstructors.‡

Without at all seeking unfairly to infer causation from sequence, I may yet, I think, say that, so far as concerns the internal administration of our great Barrack Hospital at Scutari, England owed to the Lady-in-Chief that decisive improvement which began, as we know, at the time when she first interposed, and grew always with the growth of her power. It was not only under her reign, but by force of her actual sway that Order sprang out of Chaos; that the hell she had found when she came knew at last the blessing of cleanliness; that wants of all or most of those things which money can buy

The result of her sway.

* Fifth Rep., p. 22.

† The day when the ladies disembarked on the Bosphorus.

‡ The Sebastopol Committee was apparently unanimous when reporting 'that the first real improvements in the lamentable condition of 'the hospitals at Scutari are to be attributed to private suggestions, 'private exertions, and private benevolence.'—Fifth Rep., p. 22. That the State default implied in these words was caused by the want of what I have called a 'real War Department' and that that want was distinctly traceable to our 'mixed English polity,' we have elsewhere seen—*ante*, cap. iii.

were rapidly met; and that, even though the need of trained orderlies and of a permanent staff to direct them still made itself felt, the administration of our Levantine hospitals began to seem almost perfect.*

Undesigned trial of brain-power and speed between Man and Woman.

Whilst the vigour of the Lady-in-Chief was bringing the vast Barrack Hospital from what it had been to what it became, our male rulers were taking a course which enregistered as tangible fact what satire —though almost too grossly—might have ventured to feign as a taunt.

At a time when the sick and the wounded lay awaiting the care of the State, people could not but know that the worth of any public services rendered in the matter of hospital business would largely depend on their promptitude; and, it happening at this very time that the energies of both women and males lent their strength to the same cherished purpose, there was thus undesignedly constituted, an interesting trial of both brain-power and speed between the sex which had hitherto engrossed the whole public service, and the one newly coming to share in some of the toils of State.

It might seem, perhaps, that the issue of any such trial must needs have been sure from the first; since the male kind was wielding alone the whole power of the State, and to woman as yet had not deigned to entrust any shred of authority except the bare permission to be an obedient servitress attending hospital sick-beds under the orders of medical

* It was so early as the latter end of December that, after having 'minutely examined' the great Barrack Hospital, Sir George Brown came to the almost enthusiastic conviction which is shown, *ante*, p. 423.

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officers; but the servitress, attired as for work—the gracious bib-apron seemed to fold her in honour and sanctity—had a power which man did not give, and could not very well take away, and could hardly indeed keep down. By shunning the irksome light, by choosing a low standard of excellence, and by vaguely thinking 'War' an excuse for defects which War did not cause, men, it seems, had contrived to be satisfied with the condition of our hospitals;* but the Lady-in-Chief was one who would harbour no such content, seek no such refuge from pain. Not for Her was the bliss—fragile bliss—of dwelling in any false paradise. She confronted the hideous truth. Her first care was — Eve-like — to dare to know, and—still Eve-like—to force dreaded knowledge on the faltering lord of creation. Then declaring against acquiescence in horror and misery which firmness and toil might remove, she waged her ceaseless war against custom and sloth, gaining every day on the enemy, and achieving, as we saw, in December what to eyes less intent than her own upon actual saving of life, and actual restoration of health, seemed already the highest excellence.

With the same righteous object at heart, and at nearly the very same time,† our males also passed

* That, whatever might be the process of self-deception, men, especially men in authority, had brought themselves to be thus satisfied with the state of the hospitals, there is ample proof. See evidence of Mr Sidney Herbert, Seb. Comm., 19,816-17-20-84-85-87, 19,869-83-87, 19,906-10-42; and that the satisfaction was ill founded, ibid., 19,905.

† The latter end of October. It was then that the ladies sailed, and then—the 23d—that the males took their step.

into action; but how did their brain-power work? They formed and sent out a Commission to enquire into the then existing 'conditions and wants' of our sick and wounded troops in the East, and also into the 'hospital accommodation' provided for them, and into the adequacy of such accommodation for subsequent 'contingencies;' and they were to carry their investigations to the point of attaining 'the 'full and complete truth,' and enabling themselves to present to the War Minister 'the most comprehensive 'Reports and the most desirable suggestions,' 'with 'a view to the correction of any deficiencies which 'might exist or arise in the conduct of the hospital 'establishments,' or generally in the measures adopted for the care of our troops, sick or wounded. After conducting enquiries, which, for intricacy and probable tediousness might rival whole clusters of old-fashioned Chancery suits, the Commission was to report home to the Duke of Newcastle;* and in completing instructions which ensured such a loss of time as to make discomfiture certain, our male rulers ordered their tortoise to gallop as fast as it could. They gravely enjoined despatch.

The enquiries directed were such as might well enough occupy a good number of months, if not, indeed, one or two years; but, supposing them by some magic vigour to be finished within a few weeks,

* '*Oh! good gracious! how like "them!*"' If remembering and admiring, as I do, Mrs Oliphant's delightful 'Chronicles of Carling-'ford,' one can almost hear some such comment on the masculine 'them' from the lips of her charming Miss Marjoribanks.

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how soon did any male hope that they could be brought to result in that actual 'correction of defi-'ciencies' which, of course, was the object in view? The hospitals were many, and some of them were divided from others by hundreds of miles of sea. Each one of them, however imperfect, was still a complex organism; and although its faults might be glaring, the cause of them might well be obscure, whilst, besides, over every step that led towards improvement, there always impended the danger of exciting antagonism in the minds of public servants who, when disturbed in their work by this ugly search after faults, might easily throw up defences obstructive to prompt reformation; and, upon the whole, it was scarcely imaginable that Commissioners reaching the Bosphorus in the first week of November would be able to complete their Enquiry and make their Report before the middle of the following month.

Allowing from that time one fortnight for the mail to take home the Report, another for deliberation in Whitehall and the construction of remedial plans, another for the Eastward-bound mail bringing out the decrees of the Government, with — superadded at last—yet one other fortnight for carrying them into effect, we find interposed for preparatives a period of some thirteen weeks—that is, a quarter of a year—and the time of expected fulfilment stands——not as was bitterly needed before the beginning of winter, but—almost indeed at its close, so that any of our soldiery stricken in the direst time of trial who were only to be saved through the measures advised

by the Commission, would then be at rest in their graves. But, in truth, no such speed as this computation implies could well have been realised; and few will gainsay the tribunal which described this Commission as a 'form of proceeding suited to redress 'grievances at home, or to become a basis for legis- 'lative measures,' but 'ill adapted to relieve the press- 'ing wants of 5000 men suffering under mismanage- 'ment and neglect.'*

The Commissioners were at their post in good time;† and, though hampered for a while by an error on the part of the Government,‡ they conducted the Enquiry as quickly as they very well could without neglecting their orders, and came also, on the whole, to conclusions which appear sound enough in themselves; but how was it possible that, whilst acting under instructions which compelled them to report to the War Department at home, they could promptly effect any good? Mr Sidney Herbert seeing this, and acting, unless I mistake, under the impulsion of his letters from the Lady-in-Chief, took upon himself to suggest in a private letter that, without waiting for the approval of their Report, the

* The Sebastopol Committee Rep., pp. 5, 7.

† The first week of November 1854. The Commission at first consisted of Dr Cumming, Dr Spence, and Mr Maxwell.

‡ The Government detached Dr Spence on a mission to the Crimea without providing that his two colleagues might act as a '*quorum*,' and the powers of the Commission were thus thrown into abeyance. Dr Spence being on board the Prince off Balaclava on the 14th of November, there lost his life, and Dr Sidney Laing was appointed to fill his place. The Commission recovered its competency on the 27th of November.

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Commissioners should themselves see 'the evil corrected as far as possible,' but their actual instructions at that time allowed them no manner of warrant for taking any such course; and it was only on the 6th of January 1855 that the Government enjoined the Commissioners to make suggestions to Lord William Paulet.

Receiving that warrant on either the 22d or 23d of January, they so far obeyed it as to make some recommendations to Lord William Paulet on the 26th, and some more on a later day; but these pointed to what may be called the command and disposition of troops in connection with our Scutari hospitals, and did not embrace the main subject.* The Commissioners (as expressly directed) addressed their Report—not to any authority on the spot, but—to our War Department in London. It was at Scutari on the 23d of February,† that they made their Report, and it probably reached Whitehall about the 9th of the following month, so that Ministers in the second week of March might at last undertake to found beliefs or opinions upon the knowledge obtained, might frame their measures accordingly, might send out their decrees to the East, and perhaps hope to see them beginning to take some effect in the middle

* The principal change recommended to Lord William by the Commissioners had been previously submitted to Lord Raglan himself by the Lady-in-Chief.

† Even then they had not had time enough to complete the whole Enquiry directed, but the Government pressed them to end their task, because one of them (Dr Cumming) had become the chief medical officer at Scutari, and his services were there greatly needed.

or latter part of the spring—a time later by three or four months than that at which Sir George Brown saw perfection in our hospital wards, and ascribed it to womanly energies.

Thus sorrily lagged the males in their undesigned trial of speed and power with what proved not only the swifter, not only the more agile mind, but also the higher capacity for executive business, and even the more intent will.

If, regarded as only concerning the internal administration of the Scutari hospitals, this apparent approach to perfection was thoroughly real, and already, as some would imagine, must have carried the reward of success to the heart of the Lady-in-Chief. She herself, however, was one who disdained to look with complacency upon any result of her efforts which imported no real gain of ground, and would hardly, indeed, acknowledge that from November even to February, substantial good had been done, when, in spite of all the care lavished, and concurrently with the admiration excited by an almost magic improvement in the efficiency of the hospital management, stern columns of figures showed death to be more than ever rife in the wards.

The mortality in our hospitals not yet, however, forced down.

V.

Brought about, as we saw, by those wholesale, encompassing poisons which were only to be conquered by engineers and labourers undertaking what we call

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'Public Works,' the mortality in our Bosphorus hospitals maintained its appalling height throughout the whole winter, and continued its ravages into the month of March.*

The Sanitary Commissioners:

Science then interposed. Taught at last by observing the impotence of orders framed by a Minister who forgot to count Time in his reckoning,† the Government—now newly constituted—took care to avoid his mistake; and having wisely determined that they would attack the foul poisons surrounding our Levantine hospitals with the weapons of the skilled engineer, they resolved that the Sanitary Commissioners despatched for this purpose should—not merely go enquiring, but—act, and should not only act, but be prompt. Urged by orders conceived in this spirit, the Commissioners, Dr Sutherland, Dr H. Gavin, and Mr Rawlinson, went off to the East without seemingly losing a day.

They soon found that our Levantine hospitals were suffering under rank poison—not poison of such a kind that it can be annulled or counteracted by domestic management, but of that grosser sort that can only be combated by engineering works; and propelled by wholesome instructions which ordered them 'to see instantly' to the commencement of the necessary work, and 'to its superintendence 'day by day until finished,'‡ they passed into action

* See *ante*, p. 214.

† The instructions to the Hospital Commissioners stated, *ante*, p. 441.

‡ These instructions, given by the War Department on the 19th February 1855, were so well devised, and produced such signal effect,

with admirable promptitude. In the second week of March they had already made some progress, and on the 17th had advanced their works so far as to be in a state for producing at once some part of the intended effects. Then came on a change which, if only it had been preceded by mummery instead of ventilation and drainage, and pure water-supply, would have easily passed for a miracle.* Down went the rate of mortality. Having already gone down from the terrible February rate of 42 per cent to 31, it descended in the next fortnight to 14; in the next twenty days to 10; in the next, to 5; in the next, to 4; and finally, in the next twenty days—days ending on the 30th of June 1855—to scarce more than 2 †—a rate so low as to be touching the very goal for which sanguine toilers were striving, because brought down to a level with the rate of mortality in our military hospitals at home. ‡

the change they wrought.

that they deserve to be carefully remembered by our army administrators; and, if I do not find room for them in the Appendix, I trust that the above-given date may be used as a clue for finding them in the official archives. The tone of the instructions is very peculiar, and such as to make one believe that, whether directly or otherwise—perhaps through the wholesome intervention of Mr Sidney Herbert—they owed much to feminine impulsion. The diction of the orders is such that, in housekeeper's language, it may be said to have 'bustled 'the servants.'

* When afterwards he went to the Crimea, Mr Rawlinson, the engineering member of the Commission who had achieved such vast good, had himself a sort of escape which popular diction is still apt to call 'miraculous.' He was struck by a 68-pounder shot without being permanently or indeed very seriously injured.

† Ibid. Stated more exactly with their appendant fractions, the above numbers are: 42.7, 31.5, 14.4, 10.7, 5.2, 4.3, and 2.2.

‡ That is, with the average rate in such of them as were in or near

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And now, passing from the mortality in our Bosphorus hospitals to that of our Eastern hospitals generally, I may say that the deaths were, for January 1855, 3168; for February, 2523; for March, 1409; for April, 582; for May, 594; and for June, 1042;* but besides, if consenting once more to glance beyond the bounds of this History, I may say that from the end of June 1855 to the time, twelve months later, when our army bade farewell to Crim Tartary, the mortality invading our hospitals grew less and less almost constantly, and that the monthly return which for January 1855 had recorded 3168 deaths, showed for June, in the following year, deaths numbering only six.†

Thoughts that memory ought not to shun.

But whilst dwelling on those happy changes which raised our hospital management to an almost unknown height of excellence, it less becomes our people to harbour a sense of complacency, than to think of the lives—the lost lives—that timely care might have saved. A sustained, though painful remembrance of those trials, those wants under which our troops suffered and died, would perhaps afford

London. In those, it seems, the average rate of mortality was 2.9 per cent.

* Being deaths to force per 1000 per annum :—

For January 1855,	. . . . .	1173.6
„ February	„	9792.
„ March	„	561.6
„ April	„	223.2
„ May	„	202.8
„ June	„	318.

† Ibid. The ratio of these six deaths 'to force per thousand per 'annum' is expressed by the figures which we before saw expressing the ratio for June 1856 (see note, *ante*, p. 406), *i.e.*, by the figures 2.4.

some ground for hoping that, in wars yet to come, the dire penalties of State incapacity may not again have to be borne.

VI.

Problem raised by the memory of the winter campaign.

Nor ought our people to fly from the memory of this winter campaign without bending their thoughts to some problems which tasked men's minds at the time, and have only in part found solution. The still unsolved problems are many, yet fuse well enough into one: How to make our mixed polity furnish an Executive Government which at once on the call to arms, and without needing yet further lessons in the cruel school of adversity, may be equal to the business of war.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Note to p. 1.

I SAY '*his*' [the French Commander's] 'thrice-interrupted 'design' because, though our people were to co-operate to the best of their power, General Canrobert's assault of the Flagstaff Bastion — at that time ripe for attack — was to have been the main feature of the then contemplated enterprise against the place. 'Invasion of the Crimea,' vol. v. p. 480 *et seq.* Of course, under such circumstances, it virtually rested with Canrobert to say whether the enterprise in which his troops were to take the most important part should or should not be delayed; but it must be remembered that the delay he suggested—the 'atermoiement,' as he so oddly called it—was formally and unanimously sanctioned by an Anglo-French council of war.—Ibid., p. 481. The 'difficulties' to which Canrobert called attention, when he came to Lord Raglan on the morrow of the battle, were 'the losses we had 'suffered the previous day,' and 'the large force the enemy 'had displayed' (Lord Raglan to Duke of Newcastle, Private Letter, 8th November 1854); and it is accordingly plain, as stated in the text, that Canrobert drew from 'Inkerman' his reason for delaying the assault. For proof that one of the enemy's main objects in undertaking the battle of Inkerman was to avert the assault of the Flagstaff Bastion, see 'Inva- 'sion of the Crimea,' p. 34.

No. II.

The Horse Guards before 1778.

George III., as we saw, used to speak of the time of the first Duke of Cumberland (Captain-General in 1744) as the one from which might be dated the claim of our latter-day kings to make their control over the army a right of the 'personal' sovereign as distinguished from the right of the 'State;' but it was at a later period that this control began to be exercised through the instrumentality of a 'General on 'the Staff Commanding in Chief' at the Horse Guards.

From the reign of Charles II. downwards, there had been either 'Captains-General' or Commanders-in-Chief;' but—appointed in 1778—Lord Amherst, it seems, was the first who (commanding in chief 'on the staff at headquarters'), held an office the same as the one which was filled from 1856 till long afterwards by the present Duke of Cambridge, and is still indeed extant under the immediate chiefship of his Royal Highness, though now annexed to the War Office, and subordinated to the Secretary of State.*

Before the reign of Lord Amherst, the office we call the Horse Guards did not, as afterwards, comprise any general commanding in chief on its staff, and used to consist of two departments—viz., that of the Adjutant-General, and that of the Quartermaster-General. To either of these departments the king, it seems, if he chose, could send an order straight from the palace, and—apparently apprehending the danger to liberty that might result from such a power if left unfettered—our statesmen, in their usual odd way, endeavoured to take back from the king what he seemed at first sight to possess as matter of right; for providing that no movement of troops

* See footnote, *ante*, pp. 90, 91. It may be observed that what in the text is called the War *Department* becomes in this later time the War *Office*. The old War Office, upon becoming annexed to the War Department, gave its name to the united establishment.

should take place, except under the orders of the Quarter-master-General, they also provided that any orders he gave should be based upon papers called 'the Routes' (pronounced always Routs) which were to be furnished by the War Office —a real (though not powerful) department of State, belonging to what was called the 'Government,' and under a chief whose tenure depended on the confidence of Parliament.

The efforts of George III. were directed to the object of 'managing' Parliament, not doing battle against it; and therefore the curious safeguard thus contrived by our forefathers never had its worth put to the test. It became the practice of the War Office to issue in blank the papers called 'Routes,' and leave them to be filled up at the Horse Guards.*

No. III.

Expeditions undertaken by England in the seventeen years from February 1793 *to close of* 1809.†

1793-94. Holland. Duke of York. Reinforced by Sir Charles Grey with West Indian large armament.
" Toulon. Hood.
" French coast. Moira. (Vendeans.)
" Corsica. Fortress of Bastia. (3000 men.)
" West Indian Islands—viz., Tobago, Martinique, St Domingo forts, Santa Lucia, Guadaloupe. Jarvis and Grey.
1795. Quiberon Bay. (*Emigrés.*)
" Cape of Good Hope. Lord Keith.

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* I owe to the 'History of the British Army' (by Mr Arthur Griffith) the advantage of having had my attention drawn to the subject above touched, and the result of enquiries I made was such as to confirm his statement.

† A friend of mine most kindly drew up this paper for me; but knowing that the materials on which any complete list should be founded are widely scattered, he warns me against the error of making sure that his account is strictly accurate.

1796. Leghorn. Afterwards taken by French, who sent expedition against Bastia (Corsica). English garrison in Bastia withdrew to Porto Ferraio (Elba), of which island the English had taken possession when Leghorn was seized by the French.
West Indies—viz., Granada, Santa Lucia, Essequibo, Demerara.
East Indies. Ceylon, Malaccas, Cochin Trincomalee, Amboyna, and Banda.

1797. Teneriffe.

" Trinidad. Abercromby.

1798. Minorca. General Stewart.

" Ostend. Capitulation of Coote.

" (This the year of Nelson at Aboukir Bay and battle of the Nile, but no land forces sent.)

1799. Helder.

" North Holland. Jointly with Russians.

" Naples. Jointly with Russians and Neapolitans. Surrender of Fort St Elmo, Capua, Gaeta.

" Acre. Sidney Smith. Seamen acting (brilliantly) on shore, but no land forces.

1799. } Surinam, Berbice, St Eustache, Demerara. Dutch possessions.
1800. }

1799. Civita Vecchia, Cornata, Tolfa. Surrender to Trowbridge and French. Evacuation of Rome.

" When Trowbridge took possession of Civiti Vecchia, Louis, another of Nelson's captains, took possession of the city of the Cæsars.

1800. Malta capitulated.

" Quiberon Bay forts. Pellew.

" Genoa. Abercromby, with 5000 men, arrived too late to save its capitulation.

" Ferrol. Expedition. (Pulteney.)

" Cadiz on junction of Pulteney and Abercromby.

" Curaçoa Island. (West Indies.)

" Goree Island. (West Africa.)

1801. Porto Ferraio (Elba). Successfully held by British and auxiliary forces.

" Portugal and Madeira. A few British regiments sent out to Lisbon, and £300,000. And a British squadron with troops took possession of Madeira.

" Egypt. Abercromby and Baird.

" Copenhagen. Hyde Parker and Nelson, but no land forces.

" West Indies—viz., St Bartholomew, San Thomas, Santa Cruz, St Eustache, Saba.

" East Indies. Ternate (Dutch.)

" Expedition under Nelson. Boulogne.

Peace of Amiens.

War renewed. May 1803.

1803-4. West Indies—viz., Dutch, Surinam, Demerara.
" " " Essequibo.
" " French, Santa Lucia.
" " " Tobago.
" " " San Domingo.
" Newfoundland. St Pierre and Miquelon. French fisheries.
" Goree.
" Stone and Cataraman. Expeditions to Boulogne. (Lord Keith.)
1805. Hanover. Under Lord Cathcart. Wellesley commanding a brigade.
1806. Cape of Good Hope. Baird and Popham.
" Calabrian coast, &c. Maida, Stewart.
1807. Copenhagen. Cathcart, Wellesley.
" Buenos Ayres, &c.
" Dardanelles. Duckworth.
" Curaçoa. Brisbane.
" Heligoland.
" Egypt. M'Kenzie, Fraser, Stewart.
" Madeira put under protection of British troops (after Portugal fell under dominion of France.)
1808. Gottenburg. Moore.
" Spain and Portugal. Sir Arthur Wellesley, Dalrymple, Burrard, and Sir John Moore.
1809. Portugal and Spain. Sir Arthur Wellesley.
" Walcheren.
" Ionian Islands.
" West Indies—viz., Martinique, San Domingo city, Cayenne, and French Guiana.
" Indian Ocean. Islands of France and Bourbon.

Except as regards those of the above expeditions which belonged to the three last years—1807, 1808, and 1809—there were few that did not take place under the direction of Pitt; for he was in office from the opening of the war in 1793 until the March of 1801; and again from the May of 1804 until his death in January 1806. It is true that some of the expeditions belonging to the years 1801, 1803, 1804, and 1806, took place during either the interval of Pitt's absence from the helm, or in that part of the year 1806 which was later than the day of his death; but even these, in most instances, had been ordered or planned by him before he quitted office in 1801, or before the time of his death in 1806.

No. IV.

The Walcheren Expedition.

Undertaken with a strength of altogether 100,000 armed men (of whom more than 39,000 were land-service troops), this great naval and military expedition was the most powerful armada that England had ever despatched; and, so far as concerned the sheer fighting, it was altogether successful, for our people brought every conflict in which they engaged to a victorious issue. Yet the Expedition resulted in failure—in failure so signal and complete that at first actual ridicule mingled with the feeling of savage disappointment which justly angered our people, and their bitter laugh only yielded to the bitter grief they endured when the enterprise was known to be ending in a piteous calamity—in the loss of great numbers of our splendid soldiery, destroyed or shattered in health by the ravages of the Walcheren fever.

The three more immediate causes which thus brought grave misfortune to England were:—

1. Her want of apt knowledge;
2. Her choice of an inefficient commander;
3. Her want of the power to keep a momentous war secret.

With respect to the first of the causes, her want of the knowledge required was a default that would not have been possible if our country had had the advantage of a well-ordered War Department. This is easily shown. The main objects of the enterprise were the capture or destruction of the enemy's fleet in the Scheldt, and besides, of that port and arsenal which—agreeing for once with Napoleon—England used to regard in those days as a 'pistol levelled straight at 'her breast.' Confronted by this standing menace, our country of course, if provided with a well-ordered War Department, would there have had carefully stored full and detailed accounts of the state of the Antwerp defences—accounts always

kept so complete as to be never a month in arrear of any change going on; and the obviously momentous task of keeping such a department well supplied with the information required would not have been a hard one to execute; since, as all the world knows, information about the state of any town, port, or fortress in Europe is distinctly a purchaseable commodity, if the arrangements made for acquiring it are deliberately set on foot in good time, and industriously kept up to the last. But the difficulty of obtaining information of this kind 'for the nonce' is immense in proportion to that of acquiring it beforehand by steady continuous efforts; and, incredible as it may seem in these days, our people—having no such department as was needed for obtaining and storing the kind of knowledge required—were, not days, not weeks, not months, but even several years in arrear of the knowledge that by the most peremptory dictates of prudence they were bound to have had in good time. Because they knew Antwerp to have been weak in old times, and had failed to acquire due knowledge of the subsequent changes, they apparently took it for granted that its state long ago must continue to be its state in 1809, and that Napoleon—the most busy of men in other fields of action—had chosen to be idle at Antwerp throughout all the years of his reign!

They also—and on better grounds—thought that both Antwerp and the provinces near it had been much denuded of troops; and the instructions Lord Castlereagh based upon that supposition disclosed not only what was abstractedly a well-conceived plan, but one well supported by means for carrying it into effect.

He explained that the very object the Government had in view, when determining to operate with very powerful means, was to enable the commander of the land forces to advance with a part of them swiftly, leaving other troops in his rear to establish his hold on the islands through which he would have to march. Operating promptly with the portion of his army which would thus be set free for swift movement, and acting of course in concert with our navy, Lord Chatham was to take all the measures deemed feasible for intercepting the

enemy's fleet in its probable efforts to escape—to escape by ascending the Scheldt and finding shelter in Antwerp; and besides—acting still with the accelerated part of his army—he was to push on with all speed for Sandvliet, where—then on the mainland—he would have been within a day's march of Antwerp.

When arraigned for the course of action we shall presently see him adopting, Lord Chatham's defence, it seems, was that he had been baffled by Sir Richard Strachan, the admiral in command of our naval forces; and indeed it is sufficiently plain that for this peculiar enterprise—one requiring ships of war to operate in a river, and a land force to operate on its banks—close concert between the admiral and the general was a condition of vital moment; whilst, moreover, there is ground for surmising that the maintenance of that exact concord upon which great issues depended had been gravely imperilled beforehand, if not indeed really prevented by the blight—the old blight once again!—the blight of a 'personal' king; for the commanders, naval and military, were not only two, but serving in some sort two masters, because the admiral was the genuine servant of the 'State,' whilst the general, Lord Chatham, was a 'Court favourite,' who imagined, as was afterwards proved, that, despite the Letters of Service, he might correspond—correspond secretly and behind the back of the admiral, and even behind the backs of the ministers—with George, the mere 'personal' king.* Our country had hardly a right to expect smooth easy accord between two commanders, of whom one leaned for guidance and sanction on no other power than the 'State,' whilst the other, though also in terms placed openly under the 'State,' could be looking besides to the Palace.

However, the simple fact is that, whether with or without good excuse, Lord Chatham disobeyed all that part of the instructions which enjoined rapid movements with a part of the force, and acted with the whole of his army as if he had been the subordinate officer, who according to the instructions would be left behind with a part of it to establish a hold on

* See *post*, another paper, No. VI., relating in part to that matter.

the islands. Conducting an expedition which both actually and avowedly depended for success upon swiftness, he deliberately 'sat down' before Flushing; and, whether he alone was to blame, or whether also the admiral, he was altogether so slow in his movements that he failed to intercept the enemy's fleet, and allowed it to escape by running up the Scheldt into Antwerp. It was only on the 26th of August—a whole month after the landing — that Lord Chatham moved his headquarters to Bacz—a place within sight of the mainland, though divided from it by an arm of the Scheldt.

If time had been of no value, this first month of the campaign might have seemed altogether prosperous; for, having landed at the close of July, our people seized Middelburgh, reduced Flushing on the 16th of August, taking 5300 prisoners and 200 guns; took Ter Verre (the fortress commanding the Veeregat), with its garrison of 1000 men; and Gors (the capital of South Beveland); and drove the enemy out of Bacz (the place reached at last, as we saw, by Lord Chatham's headquarters); whilst our fleet, unresisted or triumphant at every point, was in full occupation of both the East and the West Scheldt.

But all was too late; for by this time the enemy's fleet had found shelter under the guns of Antwerp; and whilst still in South Beveland, our people were met by two ugly pieces of intelligence, both apparently new to them, though one of the two was so far from fresh, that (with proper appliances for obtaining such information) they must have learnt it in earlier years. They learnt that Antwerp, though weak, though defenceless in the times that had passed, was now, in 1809, a Strong Place; and that, owing no doubt in part to want of due secrecy, though much more to the slowness of Lord Chatham's advance, the enemy, with abundant forces, had found time to come to the rescue of what was now a real fortress protecting the enemy's fleet. Under such conditions there was judged—and by a council of war—to be no better resource than the simple and primitive one of turning 'right about face,' marching back into the island of Walcheren, and preparing to hold it continuously in obedience to one of the clauses contained in Lord Castlereagh's directions.

So ended what one may call the combative part of the Expedition, but not the Expedition itself; for soon there followed a tragedy, caused simply—again the old fault!—by want—grievous want—of that topographical knowledge which must needs have been ready at hand if England had had a department prepared for the business of war. It proved that the low marshy island of Walcheren was rank with a kind of malaria which, although not destructive to the health of the natives, was known to have a deadly effect on strangers. The autumn—a perilous time—was already beginning; and exposed at that season to the germs of marsh-fever, our troops fell sick in great numbers. The Expedition lost on the whole no less than 7000 dead; but this, after all, was only a part of the calamity; for of those who survived nearly half were stricken down by the fever; and of these, when brought back to their country, nearly 13,000, it seems, were still lying prostrate with sickness.

Before December closed, our troops were withdrawn, and the occupation of Walcheren ceased. Thus, twice over, a gross want of knowledge contributed to cause the misfortunes of the Walcheren Expedition, and in each case, the want of fit knowledge resulted from that other want—the want of a real War Department to which, as shown in this volume, our country had long been submitting under stress of the 'personal' kingship.

The same fatal spell proved baneful to this Walcheren Expedition in yet one other way; for, unless the world erred, it was once more that fell dispensation of a 'personal king,' which, in spite of the 'standing compromise,' brought about the unfortunate choice of a Court favourite, that is, of John Pitt (Lord Chatham), as the commander of the land forces.

The high hopes that had been founded upon this great Expedition rested partly on the secrecy that was to hide its destination from the enemy until a very late moment; but the intended concealment failed, and Napoleon, at an early period was apprised of the English design.*

* So early as April, it was said; but at all events in July, and before the Expedition set sail, the French newspapers were accurately announcing its destination.

Who really divulged the secret few perhaps ever knew; but it must be owned that 'personal' kingship was here once more a grave obstacle in the way of plans based on the hope of maintaining concealment; for, according to the ideas of those days, it was certain that the king—the father of the garrulous 'Frederick'—would have been entrusted with the secret;* and it is plain that this unfortunate necessity must have largely increased the probability of a baneful disclosure.

When next this country shall be preparing a warlike expedition which may be thought to depend for success upon the observance of secrecy, it is to be hoped that the sovereign will prove so highly endued with a patriot spirit as to be able to make the small sacrifice of repressing curiosity, and will virtuously, wisely request to be left, like the public, excluded from any dangerous confidence.

No. V.

The Land-service strength of England in 1809, *not including her Indian Establishments.*

The tabulated statements of strength at this period are so specially and so variously aimed as to be wanting in comprehensiveness, and the simplest guidance to follow is that of Lord Liverpool, the War Minister, who stated the strength of the regular infantry at 210,000, and the strength of the cavalry at 27,000 (Ann. Reg., 1809, pp. 110, 111, 113). He omitted to give the numbers of the artillerymen and engineers, but these must have amounted to much more than 3000, so that the computation given in the footnote to p. 70 is appar-

* It was on the 28th of March in this year (1809) that the king—under stress of the 'Mrs Clarke scandal'—reluctantly accepted the resignation of the Duke of York as Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards. There is no harshness in speaking of H.R.H.'s garrulity, for it was upon this defect substantially that he himself based his defence.

ently under the mark. If to the number there stated there be added the Foot Volunteers, 300,000, the Yeomanry Cavalry between 60,000 and 70,000, the various bodies of troops called 'local,' and finally, the foreign troops in the pay of England, it becomes evident that the statement made in Parliament which (without counting Sepoys) put the whole strength of the land-service at 700,000 was well enough warranted (House of Commons, 2d May, Ann. Reg., 1809, p. 113).

But what force could England despatch to a foreign shore? This question was dealt with by Mr Windham, who had been Minister of War, and was master of his subject. He laid it down that England, without imprudence, could despatch to a distant shore (he was specially pointing to Cadiz) no less than 100,000 men (Hansard, vol. xii. p. 1111). The troops that England actually employed upon foreign service in 1809 were much divided; but, added together, the numbers of the forces thus operating were so large as to show that there was nothing visionary in Mr Windham's computation. One might easily, no doubt, attach undue significance to the following numbers, because some of the soldiers were transferred, it is believed, from one theatre of war to another, and might, therefore, if the fact were not known, be rashly counted twice over; but during this year, 1809, there were—

In Walcheren, ...	about 40,000
„ Sicily, ...	„ 15,000
„ Spain and Portugal, . .	„ 45,000

—(Lord De Grey, Ann. Reg., 1810, p. 9.)

No. VI.

The Fall of Personal Monarchy of George III. in 1809.

So far as concerned its moral attributes, and especially its mischievous bearing upon the conduct of war, the 'personal' monarchy of George the Third may be said to have tottered in

the early weeks of 1809 under the shaming disclosures of 'the 'Mrs Clarke scandal;' to have met its fall when that scandal on the 28th of March drove the Duke of York from the Horse Guards; and to have been subsequently kept down under hatches by not only the accusing results of the Walcheren Expedition, but also some new ugly truths soon afterwards dragged to light.

It is probable that, if health had permitted, the 'personal' kingship of George the Third might have soon been reviving, and once more raising its head against patient, long-suffering England; but in the November of the following year (1810) a change in the state of the king withdrew him—withdrew him definitively—from public life, and his eldest son reigned in his stead.

The Regent was a man so repulsively selfish that his memory is much loathed in this country; and no doubt, when he thought that without much trouble or danger to himself he could attain a personal object by committing an outrage on the State he was ready enough without scruple to commit the offence; * but—given up to self-indulgence—the man was not, like his father, a steady, industrious disturber of public business, and happily spared his country a renewal of 'personal' government in its more constant, more noxious form. Thus what, under other conditions, might have proved to be only a temporary interruption of the kind of 'personal' sovereignty that George the Third had established, turned out happily—and this at a critical period—to be a long-continued alleviation of the evil.

We see, it is true, that the scandals of 1809 accelerated the the fall of George the Third's 'personal' monarchy by only about nineteen months; but it is impossible to be acquainted with the history of those critical years, 1809 and 1810, without seeing what value there was in even the brief time thus

* For instance, such an outrage as the one the man committed when he insisted upon the recall of a Governor-General of India—the first Lord Minto—for the mere purpose of replacing him by a favourite of his own, Lord Moira. See Lady Minto's most interesting work containing the despatches and letters of the first Lord Minto.

gained; for after Wagram (6th July 1809) England stood all alone against Napoleon; and it was vital for her in so great a crisis to be able to 'clear for action' by shaking off Palace hindrances.

The year 1809 was one of high public spirit, and marked by a great elevation in the tone, the quality, and the power of the House of Commons; so that, when a grave, withering charge was made against the king's son, a tribunal that could be firm, without giving way to violence, stood ready to hear the accusers.

The facts undisputed were these:—

Under grant from George the Third, acting as the 'personal,' and not as the genuine 'State' king, his favourite son, the Duke of York, was Commander-in-Chief at the Horse Guards, and had the disposal of commissions in our cavalry and infantry.

Whilst living under the protection of H.R.H., his mistress, Mrs Clarke, boldly opened an office in the city for what purported to be nothing less than the sale of commissions, and she caused the men thus attracted to understand that, if they would pay her the sums which she specified—sums lower than those that would be payable on legitimately obtaining commissions by purchase—they should have the desired commissions. They paid her accordingly the sums she demanded, and in due time received from the Horse Guards the commissions for which they had applied.

Such a sequence of facts was at first sight conclusively damning; but men calm enough to judge fairly maintained at the time that, whatever might be the result of a careful judicial enquiry, there was not without it such proof as sufficed to convict his Royal Highness of that guilty knowledge which his accusers in common justice might be challenged to establish against him before consigning his name to the infamy sternly awaiting it, if he were to stand condemned of acquiescence in Mrs Clarke's fraudulent gains;* and, so far as I see,

* This was the opinion formed with great deliberation by Sir Samuel Romilly. He laid it down that, except as regards 'guilty knowledge,' all the incriminating facts were conclusively proved against the Duke of York, but that, although there was evidence sufficient to *charge* H.R.H.

there is no sure ground for maintaining that the Duke's explanation to the House of Commons might not have been substantially true. His explanation was to the effect that the unguarded expansiveness of communications made by him to Mrs Clarke had acquainted her with the names of those to whom commissions *without purchase* would soon be granted; that armed with the knowledge thus obtained from his Royal Highness, she announced to the men for whom the commissions were intended that they might have commissions, but pretended that they would be commissions *by purchase*, and added that, if they would pay the money to *her*, they only need pay at the rate pointed out by her tariff—a tariff much lower than the one that the Horse Guards followed when granting commissions by purchase. But accepting that explanation, we still have before us a sufficiently instructive example of what may befall a country if it tolerates 'personal' monarchy—an example showing plainly enough that between such a kingship and a Mrs Clarke's swindling office the steps might be only two, and both of them of such kind as to be easily taken; for, the 'personal' king being able to make the appointment of his own mere will (like a czar), without the advice of any responsible Minister, what on earth was more natural than that he should appoint to command at the Horse Guards his favourite garrulous son, and what again was more natural than that the favourite garrulous son should commit to his mistress such knowledge as enabled her to open her office, and make her fraudulent gains in the way his Royal Highness described?

However repulsive to look at, this great scandal of 1809 did much, as is shown in the text, to make way for the 'Wellington reign;' and in any Pantheon made sacred to the memory of those who, though wanting in personal merit, have happened nevertheless to do their country great good, Mrs Clarke will have a high place.*

with the 'guilty knowledge,' and bring him, as it were, to trial, there was not enough to *convict* him.

* I think there was a sect of the Gnostics which awarded high commendation on that principle. Conceiving it to be a main part of the divine scheme to have the Saviour betrayed, they extolled Judas.

The awakening of the country was aided by the scandal of the 'inaudited accounts,'—that is, by proof showing that military expenditure had been suffered to reach the enormous amount of *seven hundred millions sterling* without having been subject to an audit,—and besides, by the detection of the king in what was rightly called a 'clandestine' correspondence with the military commander of the Walcheren Expedition; for, taking place as it did without the advice or privity of his Cabinet, the king's interchange of letters with the general was a dishonourable departure from the arrangement handing over the army in the field to the direction of 'his Majesty's Ministers,' and the correspondence had the further taint of being carried on 'behind the back' of a commander—Sir Richard Strachan—on whom one of the two private-letter writers was industriously casting blame.

Thus of that long disgrace which the 'personal' monarchy of George the Third had brought upon our country the cup was now at last full. Our people, following their wont, did not formulate any clear principle, did not say in articulate words that the cause of the evil must cease; but much better than ever before since the great days of Chatham, they contrived that the business of war should be withdrawn from the 'personal' handling of the king, and carried on by the State.

With that happy change the 'Wellington reign' began.

No. VII.

The Road.

Until the troubles of the winter campaign had been subjected to the close examination which ultimately brought all to light, there was an idea that, because the marching of troops constituted one of the operations superintended by the

Quartermaster-General's Department, therefore General Airey might be held responsible for the state of the communications between Balaclava and the camp; but a serious glance at the question soon showed that the Quartermaster-General's Department, consisting entirely of officers, and not having within it or under it any artificers or workmen, or any right or power of making purchases or entering into pecuniary engagements, was not, and could not, be charged with responsibility for the execution of any 'army works.' For such purposes, it was only by survey, suggestion, and requisition that the chief of the department could act. Now, as regards 'survey' and 'suggestion,' the business of metalling the road passed far beyond those stages; for, as is above shown, the work was begun and continued, failing only for want of sufficient 'hands.' As to 'requisition' for tools, all the tools required for the purpose were not only 'requisitioned' but by that process duly obtained. As regards 'hands,' Lord Raglan, as we have seen, had not it in his power to employ the troops in constructing a road; but the allotment of such other 'hands' as could be obtained was duly made by the Adjutant-General, Estcourt, (the officer to whom the task of allotting men for service belonged), and he it was who allotted the 400 Turks mentioned in the text. General Estcourt, however,—the matter being one of general, nay, vital, importance—acted no doubt under the guidance of Lord Raglan himself, who, after consulting with the engineers, must have sanctioned the decision. In truth Lord Raglan, in concert with the engineers, and in constant hourly communication with General Airey, was every day judging as best he could how the cruelly insufficient supply of labour at his disposal could best be applied. The Commissioners, Sir John M'Neil and Colonel Tulloch were not indisposed to criticise General Airey's administration of his department in other respects, but they fairly absolved him from all responsibility for not 'metalling' the road, saying truly that fatigue parties for the purpose could not be spared, and that 'hired labour could not be obtained' (Rep., p. 33). The Report of the Chelsea Commissioners gave a new sanction to that decision. See their Report, p. xiv.

No. VIII.

DEFICIENCIES IN ISSUE OF RATIONS.*

1st Division.

Months of November and December.

Coldstream, 18th November, ½ gill rum per man short of the double ration ordered.
S. F. Guards, 3½ ounces of sugar.

2d Division.

November and December

Meat, nearly 5½ ounces.
Rum, rather more than ½ gill.
Coffee, about 1⅕th oz.
Sugar, about 1⅖th oz.

3d Division.

From 1st December 1854 *to 26th January* 1855 (57 *days*).

2¾ lb. meat to each man.
1 lb. biscuit do.
5½ gills rum do.
2 oz. rice do.
1 oz. coffee do.

4th Division.

From 1st December 1854 *to 26th January* 1855.

9 oz. biscuit to each man.
9 lb. 4 oz. of meat do.
1½ oz. coffee do.
4½ oz. sugar do.
8⅓d gills rum do.
26 oz. rice do.

* See 3d Rep. Seb. Comm., p. 416 *et seq.*

LIGHT DIVISION, INCLUDING THE MARINES ACTING WITH THEM,

1st December 1854 *to* 21*st January* 1855.

2d Dec., ½ ration of meat to some of the regiments.
3d Dec., ¼ do. do.
4th Dec., ½ do. do.
5th Dec., ¾ do. do.
6th Dec., ¾ do. and ½ ration of rum do.
7th Dec., ½ do. do.
10th Dec., ½ ration of biscuit, of meat, and of rum to some of the regiments.
22d Dec., ¼ ration of meat and ½ ration of rum to some of the regiments.
23d Dec., do. do. do.
24th Dec., ½ ration of rum to some of the regiments.
25th Dec., do. do.
26th Dec., do. do.
27th Dec., ½ ration of meat and of rum to some regiments.
28th Dec., do. do. do.
3d Jan., ½ ration of rum to some regiments.
4th Jan., no rice to some regiments.
5th Jan., ½ ration meat to do.
6th Jan., do. do. and no rice.
8th Jan., ½ ration of meat and of rum to some regiments.
10th Jan., no rice to some regiments.
11th Jan., do. do.
14th Jan., ½ ration of meat to some regiments.
16th Jan., no meat to 90th Regiment, and no sugar to that and some of the other regiments.
17th Jan., ½ ration meat to some of the regiments.
18th Jan., no rice to some of the regiments.
19th Jan., no rice—and to some of the regiments ½ ration of meat.
20th Jan., ½ ration of meat, and to some regiments no rice.
21st Jan., to some of the regiments no rice.

CAVALRY DIVISION.

No deficiencies.

No. IX.

Rations of the French Soldier.

The normal ration of the French soldier when he first came out to the East seems to have been:—

	Grammes.
Bread,*	700, *or*
Biscuit,*	550
Meat,†	250
Rice,	60
Sugar,	20
Coffee,	16
Salt,	16

The meat-ration was increased in May 1854 to 300 grammes, Ordre Général, No. 51, 'Rapport,' p. 18; and at a subsequent period the bread-ration was raised to 750 grammes.—Ibid., p. 123. The meat-ration might be represented by either fresh meat, preserved meat, or bacon; and in the latter case it was to weigh 250, not 300 grammes.—Ibid.

At a time (in February 1856) when the scurvy was raging, the authorities, it seems, undertook that the alternations between fresh and salted meat should stand thus:—

Fresh meat,	4 times in	10 days.	
Bacon,	3	do.	do.
Preserved meat,	3	do.	do.—Ibid.

It was also at *that* time announced—it had not been so in the *previous* winter—that the soldiers, by paying for them, might obtain in the State magazines rice, haricot-beans, sugar, coffee, potatoes, and sometimes onions.—Ibid. For the allowances of rice, sugar, and coffee, the State was to be reimbursed.—Ibid., p. 16.

The relation of a French 'gramme' to a pound avoirdupois is decimally represented by the figures 0.0022046; and 100 grammes are equal to *about* 3½ oz. The extra allowances granted to the men during the winter of 1854-55 will be shown in the next Appendix note.

* 'Rapport,' p. 60. † Ibid., p. 18.

No. X.

Extra Allowances of Food and Drink to the French Soldier.

October 11th, a glass of brandy to each man who *worked* in the trenches—Ordre Général, No. 115. This extended, 18th October, to the *guards* of the trenches—Ordre Général, No. 122. 25th October, an ounce of rice (30 grammes) to each soldier. Also to each soldier a glass of wine twice a-week —Ordre Général, No. 129. 3d November, 3½ ounces (100 grammes) extra of biscuit to each soldier—Ordre Général, No. 131. November 24, the grant of a glass of wine twice a-week superseded by the *daily* allowance of a glass of wine, or a glass of brandy or of rum—Ordre Général, No. 139. What I have called a 'glass' is the 16th part of a litre, and the litre, expressed decimally in pint measure, is 1.7607. The French 'gramme' in the decimal fraction of the pound avoirdupois = 0.002204. There was, besides, on the 25th of October, for the assigned purpose of enabling the soldier to buy a little brandy to mix with water, a grant of *two centimes* to each man—Ordre Général, No. 128. The value of the two centimes together was less than one farthing. For his 30 grammes of rice the soldier was to pay by 'stoppage,' but the other extra allowances he was to have gratis.

No. XI.

Note respecting the Causes of Admissions into Hospital.

Exclusive of cases treated at Scutari, the troops serving in the Crimea, from the 1st October 1854 to the 31st of March 1855, contributed during that time 52,548 admissions into hospital, of which only 3806 were occasioned by wounds; so that 48,742 admissions were caused exclusively by sickness.

In this number the cases of zymotic disease were :—

Scurvy, ...	1,678*
Cholera, ...	2,167
Diarrhœa, ...	18,708
Dysentery, . . .	4,441
Fevers, ...	9,185
Total,	36,179†

No. XII.

Note respecting the Description of Malady which occasioned Deaths in Hospital.

It seems that (for reasons assigned) the causes of deaths occurring in the Scutari Hospitals cannot be accurately known ('Papers,' p. 34); but those elsewhere occurring in hospitals which received the invalided troops of our Crimean Army from the 1st of October 1854 to the 31st of March 1855 were as follows :—

* This number, it seems, only included those cases of scurvy which were evidenced by the characteristic sores; and it is believed that, in a very, very large proportion of the other admissions, the patients were suffering from the presence of the scorbutic taint. Thus, out of the 48,742 admissions on account of sickness, there were only 12,563—not very much more than one-fourth—which could not be classed as zymotic.

Science likes, it appears, to declare that *all* zymotic disease is 'preventible,' and perhaps there may be some refined sense in which the proposition is accurate; but it can hardly be meant that (except of course by foregoing their military enterprises) the French and the English Governments could have really averted those outbreaks of cholera from which their forces cruelly suffered. What known precautions could have averted cholera from Canrobert's Division in the Dobrudja, or from the crew of the Britannia when suddenly smitten at sea, or from the army of Lord Raglan on the night of the 24th of September, when receiving excellent food and lying on ground newly reached, amongst pleasant villas and gardens in the lovely vale of the Balbec?

† Dr Hall's Report.

Out of 52,548 admissions, the deaths were 5359, of which (373 only having resulted from wounds) there were 4986 occasioned by sickness, that is, by—

Scurvy, ...	92*
Cholera, ...	1297
Diarrhœa, ...	1303
Dysentery, ...	696
Fevers, ...	1137
Total,	4465†

So, out of these 4986 deaths by sickness, there were only 521 —*i.e.*, little more than one-tenth, which did not range under one or other of the five zymotic heads above shown.

There is reason, it seems, to believe that if the additional thousands of deaths which occurred at Scutari could be accurately traced to their causes, the proportion marked out as attributable to zymotic disease would prove quite as great as the one disclosed by the above given figures.

No. XIII.

Note respecting Frost-bite in the French Army.

A statement to the effect that more than 800 French soldiers (a third of 2500) died from frost-bite in the month of January, is one important enough to deserve the privilege of resting upon something better than 'hearsay' authority; but the French official returns are unfortunately in so defective a state that they afford no materials for either affirming or contradicting the assertion. They show that 15 men died from frost-bite *in the ambulances*, but make no statement at all of the numbers who died from the same cause *in the Bosphorus hospitals.*

* The last-but-one footnote is here again applicable.

† Dr Hall's Report.

It is curious that in the following winter—the winter of 1855-56—when no conflict was going on, when the Allies had the whole south side to themselves, and when there had been a long time, a year and three-quarters, for preparation, the Imperial Government of France proved unable to protect its troops from frost-bite. In the December, January, and February of that winter the admissions for frost-bite were 2058.—'Rapport,' p. 565.

No. XIV.

Note showing how the French Reinforcements interfered with the expedient of judging Health from the percentage of Sick.

Suppose the commander of the French 'Army of the East' to be on the 'Heights before Sebastopol' with an army of 30,000, of whom ten per cent are in hospital, when in comes a despatch announcing that he is reinforced by the arrival in the Dardanelles of 15,000 fresh troops, all in a sound state of health. He thereupon sees that the ratio of his sick to his strength has dropped all at once from 10 to 7½ per cent; but he would not of course treat this change of percentage as showing any improvement in the health of his troops on the Chersonese. Before any such use could be made of percentages, it would be necessary to base them upon very special returns, showing how many of the reinforcing troops had not only landed in the Crimea, but fairly come under those influences—wet, cold, fatigue, and privation—which were fast sending men into hospital.

No. XV.

Mr Delane at Oxford.

Whilst on horseback one day by the side of Delane in the Park, I happened to mention to him what had been said to me by a man of wondrous brain-power, that is, by the Chancellor Lord Westbury. This statement was to the effect that after the age of seventeen, he, Lord Westbury (then Richard Bethell), had entirely supported himself at Oxford by the fruits of his own exertions, never thenceforth putting his father to any expense.* Delane answered to the effect that with a little change as to the age he could say the same, and that after the age of [I think he said eighteen, but it may have been nineteen] he had supported himself at Oxford by his own exertions entirely; and he added that he had lived very comfortably, and that (what he said was a great object with him) he had kept a hunter.

Upon my showing a natural curiosity to know how he had earned the income sufficing for these purposes, he answered: 'By my pen.'

When I asked by what kind of writing, he answered in these words:—

'By writing leading articles for country newspapers.'

Then the conversation dropped, and I never learnt what the arrangements were under which it was possible for a lad at Oxford—or, indeed, for any tried writer—to make his pen serve him so steadily in the peculiar field of literature to which Delane applied his almost boyish energies; but I have heard that in London at one time there was a central machinery for supplying leading articles to country newspapers, and I suppose it must have been through a mart of that kind that Delane found the means of having his aid as a writer so largely and so constantly accepted.

* The boy had won a scholarship before coming up to Oxford, and when there—despite extreme youth—his fame brought him pupils.

No. XVI.

The Editor's Card-Basket.

Whether saved by any real housemaid from any real editor's card-basket, or, as seems more probable, framed by a mere giddy writer of fiction, this extract may convey an idea of the 'eager words written in pencil' upon cards and leaves of pocket-books which in stirring times under Delane, the trained midnight janitors of the 'Times,' standing sentry in Printing-House Square, could not always refuse to take in—could not always even refuse to bring under the editor's eye:—

'Only one moment—last importance!'—'The Queen would 'be miserable.'—'I demand the name and address of the 'musical critic who says I have lost a note.'—'I have brought 'a few books to show that the Privy Council is guilty of 'heresy.'—'Have come straight from our chief. There's the 'devil to pay in the Cabinet. Am authorised to tell you all.' —'I propose to lay bare the conspiracy which prevents the 'sale of my poem.'—'Travelling straight round by Ireland, I 'have come home on sick-leave to ask for the command of the 'new "flying column." Please just say it would be profligate 'to appoint any man except me.'—'Seeing how careful you 'are about parcels and things for our army, I have come with 'supplies of fresh linen and eight hampers for my husband in 'the horrid Crimea. Having lost all confidence in the Gov-'ernment, I send these things out by the "Times."'—Second card from the same: 'An editor of your well-known sagacity 'will see at a glance which end of each hamper must always, 'please, be kept uppermost.'—'Give me only two minutes! 'the fate of the Government is at stake.'—'One minute! the 'fate of the party.'—'One moment! the fate of the country.' —'The general has come home on "urgent private affairs," 'and only wants three quiet hours to show that he is not a 'fool.'—'I have come with the lady who plays "nurse" to 'my "Juliet," and' (by going fairly over the part) 'will show

'you the falsehood of saying that I am "weak" or "cold" in 'the balcony scene.'—'I will prove to you that we have not an 'army.'—'I come on the vital question—the question of Turn- 'pike Gates.'—'I will show you that our ships are all tubs.' Second card from the angry divine: 'I am still outside with 'my books, and what's more, I won't go away until you 'solemnly promise to let the Privy Council be smashed.'—'I 'come straight from the Commons, and left my husband still 'speaking; thought him weak; my trust wholly in you to 'make his speech seem nice and forcible; both our "Whips" 'in a flurry; my little French maid here—yes, yes, sir, I come 'with my maid—would certainly manage men better; divi- 'sion not expected till nearly 4 o'clock; please, come down 'and speak to me at the door of my carriage.' Second card from the same. 'You say "Impossible?" Fiddlestick! 'How dare you keep me waiting out here at 2 o'clock in the 'morning in this absurd Printing-House Square? Come 'down, I tell you, at once!'

Which of any appeals such as these might drive its way through all barriers would depend upon the vigilance of the outposts, and the discriminating sagacity exercised by the inner line of sentries on guard.

No. XVII.

The Mystery of the Soldier's Nature.

That many a private soldier of the time of the Crimean war must have been other than what people deemed our private soldiers to be, was proved to our really surprised country by the power, the touching beauty of his letters from the seat of war; and, when sick or wounded in hospital, his sentiment of noble courtesy and gratitude towards the high-bred gentlewoman who deigned to be his kind nurse seemed to ally

itself dimly with what, if not piety, was at least a pious tone of thought and of speech—a tone which under one aspect was all the more courteous if it sprang from no settled doctrine, but rather from the worship he owed to the gracious lady beside him.

I do not pretend to understand the soldier's true nature, and indeed all I learn tends rather to deepen than to solve the mystery. It cannot be that he is an angel—if he were, notwithstanding his inches, we should not want to enlist him—but (except upon the supposition of his being an actor who is matchless in playing a part) it is impossible to doubt that his character has angelic phases. It is true, perhaps, that these show themselves the most strongly when he lies on the bed of sickness, and finds himself treated with gentle kindness; but still I can hardly think that what I have called the 'mystery' of his nature is disposed of by repeating the couplet which begins with—'The devil was sick.'

The circumstance I am going to mention tends to show that the 'angelic phase' of the soldier's nature discloses itself —not exceptionally in a few instances chosen out of the many, but—in numbers and numbers of men laid low in hospital wards, and selected entirely at random.

I was told by the late Mr Stafford (the generous friend to our sick and wounded troops, of whom I spoke in the text*) that, after his labours at the bedside of our soldiery, he had become deeply impressed by the piety, the gratitude, the gentleness of the men whose sufferings he had tried to assuage, and that he spoke in that sense to Lady Ellesmere. She answered in a way implying that she thought his impressions must surely be fanciful. We live, she said, in a manufacturing district where many troops are quartered, and we hear only of their vice and profligacy.

Stafford said, 'Well, will you come to Chatham, and there 'form your own opinion after seeing and conversing with the 'men? I will arrange that you shall be in each ward at a 'time when no medical officer is there, and when no one is 'present who could be suspected of causing the men to act a

* *Ante*, p. 436.

'part.' Lady Ellesmere consenting, the project was carried into effect. Lady Ellesmere passed hours in the wards, conversing with the men, and reading to them, and praying with them. When her task had ended, she was rejoined by Stafford, and he said to her, '*Now*, what do you say of the sol-'diers?' She answered, according to Stafford, in these very words, 'It seems to me that every one of them is a Christian 'and a gentleman.'

No. XVIII.

*The Instructions to the Sanitary Commissioners.**

'WAR DEPARTMENT, 19*th February* 1855.

'GENTLEMEN,—Her Majesty having been pleased to assent 'to your proceeding on a sanitary mission to Constantinople 'and the Crimea, you are instructed to obey the directions 'which follow:—

'The *utmost expedition* must be used in starting on your 'journey, in the journey itself, and in the execution of all that 'is necessary at the place of your destination.

'On your arrival at Constantinople, and Balaklava, you will 'put yourselves *instantly* into communication with Lord W. 'Paulet, Admiral the Hon. F. Grey, and Lord Raglan respec-'tively, and you will request of them *forthwith* (according to the official directions they will have received) full powers of 'entry into every hospital, infirmary, or receptacle of whatsoever 'kind for the sick and wounded, whether ashore or afloat.

* It is on account of the striking effects it produced (see p. 446 *et seq.*) that I think it advisable to print this despatch.

The italics are mine. I have resorted to them for the purpose of showing how deeply the Government—at last—had become impressed with the value of Time, and also, I think, with a view of showing that—however indirectly—the writer of the despatch had received impulsion from a woman's mind. It should be remembered that on the 19th of February Mr Sidney Herbert was still a member of the Government.

'You will inspect every part of such infirmaries, ascertain 'the character and sufficiency of the drainage and ventilation, 'the quantity and quality of the water-supply; and determine 'whether the condition of the whole is such as to allow, by 'purity of the air and freedom from overcrowding, fair play 'and full scope to medical and surgical treatment for the 'recovery of health.

'You will call to your aid for this purpose, whether as wit- 'nesses or as guides, any of the officers or attendants that you 'may require.

'The result of your inspection and opinions, together with 'a statement of all that is necessary should be done, whether 'in the way of arrangement, of reduction of numbers in the 'wards, cleansing, disinfecting, or of actual construction, in 'order to secure the great ends of safety and health, must be 'laid, *as speedily as possible*, before Lord W. Paulet, Admiral 'Grey, or Lord Raglan, as the case may be, or such persons as 'may be appointed by them to that special duty; and you 'will request them to give *immediate* directions that the works 'be completed.

'As *no time is to be lost* you may reserve your detailed and 'minute reports, and give, in the first instance, a statement 'only of the things to be done forthwith.

'The Engineer-Commissioner will be expected to conduct 'the inspection along with his colleagues, and to devise, and 'to *see executed*, all such structural arrangements as may be 'declared indispensable.

'You will examine the modes whereby the sick and wounded 'are conveyed to the transports, or to the hospitals, ashore or 'afloat.

'You will take care that, as far as possible, all evil influ- 'ences from without be removed, so that the air inhaled by 'the inmates of the hospitals be not contaminated. It is 'reported, for instance, that the hospital-ship in the harbour 'of Balaklava is much surrounded by dead carcases.

'As a necessary consequence you will order that the dead 'be interred at a sufficient distance from the hospitals. You 'will lay down rules both as to the time and mode of inter-

'ment, consulting, of course, the convenience of the consti-
'tuted authorities.

'Should any other hospital or receptacle for the sick be
'decided on, while you are on this expedition, you will ex-
'amine it, and state all that must be done for health, decency,
'and comfort.

'You will not interfere, in any way, with the medical and
'surgical treatment of the patients, nor with the regulations
'prescribed to the nurses and attendants.

'Upon your arrival at Constantinople, you will determine
'among yourselves in what way you can best carry out the
'objects of your mission.

'*It is important that you be deeply impressed with the neces-*
'*sity of not resting content with an order*, but that *you see in-*
'*stantly by yourselves or by your agents to the commencement of*
'*the work, and to its superintendence, day by day, until it be*
'*finished.*

'It is your duty, in short, to state fully, and urge strongly
'for adoption by the authorities, everything that you believe
'will tend to the preservation of health and life.

'The camp must also come under your immediate and
'anxious attention.

'You must consider, and apply, with the least possible
'delay, the best antidotes or preventives to the deadly exhala-
'tions that will be emitted from the saturated soil whenever
'the warmth of spring shall begin to act on the surface.

'You must consider how all decaying substances, present
'and future, may be removed speedily, or otherwise disposed
'of with safety. Also in what way the feculent matter of the
'camp may be rendered innoxious.

'You will pay special attention to the harbour of Balaklava,
'and state your opinion as to the best mode of cleansing it,
'and of keeping it clean from the accumulations of filth float-
'ing on the surface. It will be desirable to ascertain, not
'only for the convenience of the transport of the sick, &c., but
'also for the removal of all kinds of nuisances to the outside
'of the harbour, whether jetties might not be easily con-
'structed.

'As stated in your instructions relating to the hospitals, so 'here you will, *with the utmost possible* despatch, lay your 'plans before the proper authorities, in order that they may 'be carried into execution.—I have the honour to be, gentle-'men, your obedient humble servant,

(Signed) 'PANMURE.

'Dr SUTHERLAND.
'Dr H. GAVIN.
'Mr RAWLINSON.'

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